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Jordan Times

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Merry Christmas

The Jordan Times will not be published on Thursday/Friday due to the Christmas holiday. The next issue of the newspaper will appear on Saturday, Jan. 27. The Jordan Times wishes its readers and advertisers a Merry Christmas.

Syria: No multilaterals without progress

DOHA (AP) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa was quoted Tuesday as reiterating that his country will not take part in the multilateral Middle East talks scheduled for Moscow on Jan. 28-29 unless progress has been recorded in the bilateral negotiations. "There is no meaning to discussing such issues as regional cooperation, water problems and economic relations without having taken negotiations to the core of the (peace) process which is the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories," Mr. Sharaa told the Qatari daily Al Sharq. Syria and other Arab parties directly involved in the conflict with Israel have made no progress towards a Middle East settlement in the bilateral talks to resume early January in Washington. Mr. Sharaa said his country agreed to get involved in the U.S.-led peace-making process initiated under U.S. and Soviet auspices in Madrid "not out of faith in Israel but because of the strong assurances from the American side." Syria, he said, "knows full well that Israel does not want peace." The bilateral talks will not progress "without effective American intervention," Mr. Sharaa said in an interview conducted in Damascus before Wednesday's visit of Qatar's Emir, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Hamad Al Thani.

Regent visits GHQ

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday paid a visit to the Armed Forces Headquarters and met with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleh, the chief of staff — Royal Air Force, and a number of assistants as well as the Armed Forces Inspector General. Prince Hassan met for a while with Field Marshal Abu Taleh and discussed with him issues of interest to the Armed Forces. Prince Hassan also took part in a long walk exercise carried out by one of the Special Forces Units as part of their training activities to develop physical fitness and tolerance.

Cabinet holds meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet decided in a meeting held Tuesday under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker to set up a first-instance court in Jerash district and a reconciliation court in Naqura sub-district. It also approved an amendment to the Lawyers Law and decided to re-allocate JD 1,575,000, allocated previously for paying back debts and appropriation costs, to support local councils. It has also decided to allocate JD 1,425,000 for supporting municipal and rural councils from the emergency budget allocations. The Cabinet also approved the minutes of the Jordanian-European Cooperation Council meeting which was held in Brussels last September.

Israel joins treaty against missile spread

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel will join an international pact limiting the spread of missile technology on Dec. 31, the defence ministry announced Tuesday. The treaty involved is the missile technology control regime, set up by the 1978 industrialised nations in 1978 and joined since by nine other countries. A ministry statement said Israel would sign "a new proclamation" controlling exports of missiles or components that could be used to deliver warheads weighing 500 kilograms or more with a range of 300 kilometres.

Iran releases 6 Moroccan POWs

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran has released six Moroccan captured as prisoners of war (POWs) during the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, the government announced Tuesday in Tehran. The official Iranian news agency, IRNA, said the six were handed over to the Moroccan charge d'affaires in Tehran, Hassan Mohammad Davoud, in what it described as a humanitarian move and a gesture of goodwill following last week's resumption of full diplomatic ties between Iran and Morocco.

Dutch expel 9 more Russian Jews

AMSTERDAM (R) — Nine more Russian Jews denied asylum in the Netherlands were deported to Israel Monday, the Dutch ANP news agency said. The Dutch Justice Ministry last week forcefully expelled 43 asylum-seekers in a pre-dawn raid by police. About 50 more Russian Jews face expulsion after being denied asylum in the Netherlands, ANP quoted a justice ministry spokesman as saying. More applications have yet to be processed. The latest group, included three children, was among 200 Jews seeking asylum.

4 killed, 13 wounded in clashes in Turkey

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (R) — Four people, including a Turkish soldier were killed and 13 were injured on Tuesday in two incidents in Turkey's rebel-hit southeast, eyewitnesses said. Clashes broke out between Kurds and security forces when several hundred people from the town of Lice in Diyarbakir province were stopped during a march to nearby Kulp town to protest the killing of 13 rebels. One civilian was killed and five others were wounded in the clash, witnesses said.

Bethlehem marks another Christmas under occupation

BETHLEHEM, Occupied West Bank (Agencies) — Palestinians defied their leaders and closed their shops in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve to show the world that there is little peace on earth and goodwill to men under Israeli occupation. Bethlehem's veteran Mayor Elias Freij fumed against local activists who ordered shopkeepers and restaurant owners to close so that world television cameras could not show their life was normal in Christ's traditional birthplace. "These are ignorant people who do not respect the spirit of Christmas," Mr. Freij said in an interview in his office overlooking Manger Square. Several hundred tourists and pilgrims filed through the low portal of the Church of the Nativity, watched by hundreds of soldiers and police from adjoining rooftops. The number of foreign visitors was much higher than last year when the Gulf crisis devastated tourism in the Holy Land although for Palestinians the holiday was as gloomy as ever. "The underground leadership of the uprising had allowed businesses to open for Christmas but local activists ordered a strike."

Mr. Freij's son, stayed open but shuttered streets and army checkpoints marred the festivities, as they have done on each Christmas since the intifada erupted in December 1987. Paramilitary police with metal detectors searched everyone entering the centre of Bethlehem, a town of 35,000 people eight kilometres south of Jerusalem. Soldiers crouched on roofs cradling rifles. Cars and taxis were kept out. "I was scared stiff seeing so many people with guns," said Lisa Marrs of Brisbane, Australia. "We don't get that at home," said the 23-year-old who was on a one-day sight-seeing trip from a Mediterranean cruise ship. Few tourists actually stay in the West Bank town or attend midnight mass beside the Church of the Nativity, the Greek Orthodox Church originally built by the fourth century Byzantine Emperor Constantine. Local Palestinians are an even rarer sight around the church. "Most of the people here are soldiers and foreigners," said Nihad Junceneh. "Our people do not want to go through all these searches and roadblocks. We will have to celebrate Christmas quietly in our own way."

East peace talks in Madrid and Washington, said hopes of a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict had eased the atmosphere in the town of which he has been mayor for 20 years. Many residents disputed this, speaking of their sense of frustration at the continued heavy Israeli presence and restrictions on their lives even after Madrid. "Nothing has changed," said Adel Asmari, 28. "In fact it is worse because we expected the peace conference to give us something." Visitors were searched and had to pass through metal detectors to enter Manger Square and by the Church of the Nativity, revered as the site of Christ's birth. The holiday officially began with the arrival of the Roman Catholic patriarch of the Holy Land, Archbishop Michel Sabbah, who was led into the church by traditional Muslim guards wearing red fezzes. In a ceremony that dates to Turkish rule over Palestine, Archbishop Sabbah was greeted by the current Israeli rulers, represented by the military governor of Bethlehem, Eldad Yonah, and other officials. Some merchants said they ignored the call for a strike by local activists because of an ear-

Gulf Arab leaders ponder defence and development fund

KUWAIT (R) — Gulf Arab leaders debated proposals for a unified army and a multi-billion dollar development fund during the second day of their first post-war summit in Kuwait. Officials said the heads of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states went into a closed session Tuesday to grapple with the difficult issues facing the oil-rich region in wake of the Gulf crisis. GCC members Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — which together own nearly half of the world's oil reserves — want to come up with a workable defence plan to reduce their reliance on foreign powers. They are also under pressure to

give non-Arab Iran, their most powerful neighbour, a more prominent political role without giving in to Iranian demands for direct involvement in their defence arrangements. Gulf Arab officials say a proposal from Oman's Sultan Qaboos to create a 100,000-strong army drawn from the six states was likely to be scaled down to 20,000-40,000 men because of lack of manpower. Even if the rulers approve the idea, resolving the command structure and how to share the cost of a separate force would take time, diplomats say. The GCC rulers are expected to finalise a joint stand supporting the Middle East peace process and approve measures to create a Gulf common market — a goal

which so far has eluded the decade-old alliance — by the year 2000. They are also likely to give the go-ahead for a \$10-billion development fund to channel funds to Arab allies hit by the Gulf crisis. GCC states want to come up with a new mechanism for aid because of widespread belief much of the money they pumped into other Arab countries before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was 'wasted. Iraq was one of the main recipients. Foreign ministers from the six states met ahead of their leaders Tuesday at a huge and lavishly decorated tent erected near the Emir of Kuwait's Bayan Palace

Buckley's remains expected

BEIRUT (Agencies) — The remains of murdered Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) chief in Lebanon William Buckley are expected to be returned by his kidnappers' son, diplomatic sources said Tuesday. The sources said they expected Mr. Buckley's corpse to be dumped in Beirut as happened on Sunday with the body of slain U.S. hostage William Higgins which was handed over to the U.S. embassy on Monday. "The release of the two bodies had been agreed by the kidnappers in talks with U.N. mediator Giandomenico Picco as a step towards winding up the nearly decade-long hostage saga, the sources said. Diplomats said a U.N. report from New York that Mr. Picco was in Beirut on Monday when Mr. Higgins' partially mummified corpse was identified was the result of a misunderstanding with U.N. headquarters. "Picco was in Damascus when the announcement was made in New York," a Western diplomat said, adding that Mr. Picco had not made any breakthrough in his efforts to win the freedom of the last Western hostages in Lebanon, Germans Heinrich Struberg and Thomas Kempton. "He was working on the Germans ... he is about to leave, apparently without a breakthrough on them," the diplomat said. U.N. sources in Damascus confirmed Mr. Picco did not go to Beirut and said he was preparing to leave the Syrian capital Tuesday.

Hawkish minister quits Israeli coalition

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Hawkish cabinet minister Rafael Eitan, Israel's chief of staff during the 1982 Lebanon invasion, quit on Tuesday in a row over electoral reform. Mr. Eitan said he was resigning as agriculture minister because Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir opposed a law for direct elections of the premier. Mr. Shamir previously supported the electoral reform bill but announced his U-turn at a Likud party convention on Sunday. Mr. Eitan read his resignation letter on army radio. "Because imposing party discipline on part of the coalition on the law for electoral reform constitutes a violation of the (coalition) agreement... Tsomet is quitting the coalition and I resign from government," he said. Mr. Eitan heads the two-strong extreme-right Tsomet (Crossroads) faction in parliament. But Mr. Shamir's coalition will still have a majority in parliament without him. The 3,500-member Likud central committee overwhelmingly endorsed Mr. Shamir's opposition Monday by voting against electoral reform. But Likud ministers were vague when asked if this meant Mr. Shamir would impose party discipline on the vote expected by the end of this month. Mr. Eitan said he might reconsider his resignation if Mr. Shamir publicly declared that Likud parliamentarians could vote according to their conscience. His resignation will take effect next week.

Mr. Shamir's bureau chief Yosi Ahimich said the prime minister was surprised at the resignation. "There is no justification and they don't have any reason to leave the coalition," he told army radio. Mr. Eitan, who once likened Palestinians to cockroaches, is more hardline than most ministers — the most right-wing in Israel's history. He had previously threatened to quit if the government entered negotiations on territorial concessions or self-rule for the Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israel has started peace talks with Palestinians, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon whose central demand is that the Jewish state trade occupied land for peace. Mr. Eitan was army chief of staff during the 1982 Lebanon invasion. He and the then defence minister, Ariel Sharon, engineered the operation which Israel said was aimed at driving Palestinians out of South Lebanon. As agriculture minister he has campaigned for Israel to maintain control over the West Bank for its valuable water resources. Mr. Eitan's move could encourage two other right-wing parties with swing votes to topple Mr. Shamir's government over the peace talks that they vigorously oppose. Mr. Eitan stressed the motive for Tuesday's move was not the peace talks expected to resume next month in Washington.

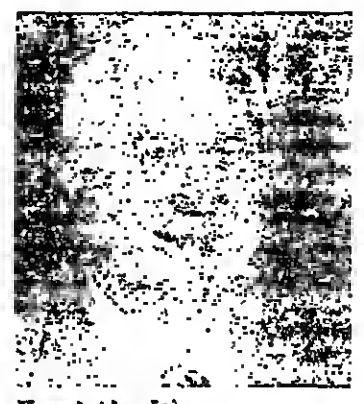


REGENT RECEIVES PEACE DELEGATION — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Tuesday received at the Royal Court the head of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks, Abdel Salam Al Majali, and members of the delegation. Dr. Majali briefed Prince Hassan on the latest developments of the talks which were held in Washington recently. Prince Hassan wished the delegation's untiring efforts for establishing a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the region. The audience was attended by Chief of the Royal Court Akram Abu Odeh.

Abu Jaber: Peace needs change in thinking of Mideast countries

By Kirk Albrecht
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Foreign Minister Kamel Abu Jaber has said in an interview that it is time for the nations of the Middle East to "break out of the straitjacket of ideology, from the citadel mentality" in order to make peace. Speaking to the USA Radio Network in Amman Sunday, Dr. Abu Jaber discussed the current frosty climate for peace. "Our people — well, on both sides — they don't think except of the Arab-Israeli conflict. The housewives, taxi drivers, the doctor, the lawyer, the professor — everybody in our society is in one way or another a soldier dedicated to destruction, and I think it is time to change that." The foreign minister said that there was a great cost involved in the decades-old conflict, noting that it is much more than merely physical. "It is taking all of our energies... we can't continue doing that; it's no good for us, and we're both becoming marginalised. There is so much beauty and energy in our cultures — it's such a waste." Despite his sentiments, Dr. Abu Jaber was quick to point out Jordan's contention that the Israelis, particularly Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, remains intransigent, likening him to a Bib-



Kamel Abu Jaber

lical prophet. "Sometimes I listen to Mr. Shamir and I think he's a Biblical prophet rather than a politician... Elijah or Jonah or Amos thundering down prophecies. Everything he says is in absolute terms. Dr. Abu Jaber said he hopes that the future will see an end to this absolutism, replaced by "neighbourly attitudes." Jordan, Dr. Abu Jaber said, is a "pragmatic, practical, rational" state which is trying to play a major role in the current Middle East peace process. "We hope we can bring some sense to this senseless region which has known nothing but war for a long time," Dr. Abu Jaber said. Undersewing His Majesty King Hussein's role in the peace process, Dr. Abu Jaber said: "The tenacity and perseverance of this man to the cause of peace is unbelievable. His moderation and willingness to listen to others

is a breath of fresh air among world leaders. He believes that peace will get the area on the course to prosperity." In spite of King Hussein's efforts, "Jordan can't make peace by itself," declared the foreign minister. "It has to be comprehensive peace that first and foremost addresses the national aspirations of the Palestinian people." Dr. Abu Jaber spoke ardently of the emotional toll stemming from the conflict. "How much does it cost when a man is terrorised all his life? How much do you put on it, whether he is Israeli or Palestinian?" Referring to common Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories, Dr. Abu Jaber added, "When somebody's house is confiscated or demolished, or when he watches his tree pulled out of the ground and he can't do a thing about it, how much cost do you put on that?" Dr. Abu Jaber stressed that this is the kind of thinking very few in the international community engage in. Dr. Abu Jaber spoke in hopeful terms of what can happen if a just peace, based on the principles of international law and legitimacy, is achieved in the Middle East. He believes that there is a great future for the whole area in an atmosphere of peace. "This is one area of the world that can break the cycle of underdevelopment — we can do it. And by doing it we can help other people in the world."

Chinese minister in Israel

BEIJING (Agencies) — China confirmed Tuesday that a senior Foreign Ministry official was in Israel, fuelling speculation that Beijing was poised to establish diplomatic relations with the Jewish state for the first time. "Vice Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang is paying a private visit to Israel as the guest of the China Travel Service in Tel Aviv," the ministry said. The one-line statement gave no further explanation as to why Mr. Yang, believed to be the most senior Chinese to visit the Jewish state, was in Israel. Last week President Yang Shangkun reassured Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat in Beijing of China's continued support for Palestine and is believed to have briefed him of China's plans to set up ties with Israel. Israel Radio said Mr. Yang had arrived on Monday. Israeli Television reported that Beijing had asked that the visit be kept secret but Foreign Minister David Levy made it public at a parliamentary committee meeting on Monday. Mr. Yang's visit is the latest in a series of confidential contacts between Israel and China. Their foreign ministers met at the United Nations in October.

Iraq sees breakthrough on oil sales, minister says

BAHDAH (R) — Iraq's oil minister Tuesday predicted a breakthrough in talks with the United Nations over oil sales. "I don't think there is any other choice but to make a breakthrough — nobody should continue with the sanctions..." Oil Minister Usama Al Hiti told Reuters in an interview. Mr. Hiti, in his first general outline of what Iraq was seeking from a U.N. plan to sell oil, indicated Baghdad might consider a figure of \$2.4 billion of approved oil sales instead of the current \$1.6 billion figure it has rejected. "It's better than 1.5," he said when asked whether he could live with the figure which was later downgraded in Security Council Resolution 706. Mr. Hiti said, however, Iraq "would be hoping for more" in talks with U.N. officials in Vienna next month. "Somewhere between \$1.6 (billion) and doubling it," he said. He said apart from the basic amount, Iraq would need hundreds of millions of dollars more to import spare parts, chemicals and communications equipment to allow it to re-enter world markets.

The United Nations, which has enforced a sweeping embargo since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August last year, has proposed that Baghdad be allowed to sell \$1.6 billion worth of oil under supervision to buy food and medicine. Iraq, the world's second biggest oil exporter after Saudi Arabia before the Gulf crisis, has rejected the plan as an infringement of its sovereignty. It says it would be left with less than \$600 million after deducting war reparations and other debts. Iraqi and U.N. officials will begin talks in Vienna on Jan. 6 or 7 to discuss changes to the proposal, which expires in March. Mr. Hiti said in addition to raising the ceiling for oil sales, Iraq would ask for longer-term contracts, approval to use its Al Bkr port terminal and a pipeline across Saudi Arabia to the Red Sea, and freedom to barter instead of dealing in cash. Mr. Hiti hinted Iraq might be flexible on international monitoring of exports, one of its key objections to the U.N. proposals. "We would ask them not to install any inspection or monitoring people who are not really needed," he said, adding that Baghdad had always been ready to give the U.N. details of its oil

Jordan explains stand on Zionism resolution

JORDAN'S POSITION towards the repeal of the U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism was governed by the actual Israeli policies and actions against the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan has said. "The facts on the ground point to continuous oppression of Palestinians in respect of personal and political rights, the allocation of resources, and the fundamental question of identity," the Crown Prince said in a statement distributed among American congressmen by the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington. The Crown Prince also referred to Israel's continued settlement activities in the occupied territories and the occupation power's seizure of Arab lands and said: "These measures, accompanied by a fresh crackdown on Palestinians in the occupied territories, violate both international law and the democratic principle of non-discrimination." "For Jordan's part, therefore, the status of Zionism as a political or cultural philosophy is not at issue; the policies of the state of Israel are," said the Crown Prince. Jordan voted against the repeal of the resolution last week. Following is the full text of the Crown Prince's statement: There has been much comment recently on the repeal of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3379, equating Zionism with racism. Before considering Jordan's position on this subject, it is worth pointing out that the motion to repeal Resolution 3379 came in the context of ongoing peace negotiations. It is the sincere hope of Jordan that all parties to the peace process continue down the long and difficult path to peace in the spirit of open exchange and communication. If the process is ultimately to lead to the establishment of lasting and equitable conditions of true peace in the region, we believe that this spirit must at all costs be maintained. But at this stage of the process, when mutual confidence is low, measures designed to break down psychological barriers between the sides are crucial. The sixth summit of the Islamic Conference Organisation at Dakar voted to

(Continued on page 3)

He said without spare parts, Iraq would be unable to consistently maintain production for even the six-month period for oil contracts provided in the original resolution. Mr. Hiti said Iraq regarded as essential the extension of the six-month contracts allowed in the original resolution. "This plan was not drawn up by oil people," he said. "Oil is just not a thing you jump in the market and jump out of the market." Iraq produced about 3.25 million barrels of oil a day before the six-week Gulf war over Kuwait damaged installations and U.N. sanctions halted most exports. Mr. Hiti said Baghdad had held talks with multinational oil companies over the last few months on plans to develop its vast southern oil fields. Contracts could be signed soon after sanctions were lifted. "We need investment and we are now making plans to look for such investment," Mr. Hiti said. He said the southern fields, with 38 billion barrels of proven reserves, represent the biggest untapped oil wealth in the world. The government says it will drill thousands of new wells in the south over the next eight years.

First round in Washington in perspective

By David Kattab

ONE OF THE mistakes in analysing the ongoing peace talks is to rate them on a day-to-day basis. Rather what is needed is a periodic evaluation perhaps on a monthly basis or even longer than that. For example both the Bush administration and senior members of the Palestinian negotiating team have decided on giving the present peace process until March to produce concrete tangible results. Nevertheless, the end of the first stage of bilateral talks in Washington is worthy of comment.

While on the surface the bilateral talks in Washington seem to have been fruitless some important accomplishment have been made despite the apparently useless "corridor diplomacy."

By and large the first session in Washington was an inevitable first step that both sides needed to take. It was a time for both sides to size up each other. Having both agreed on what will turn out to be a long and tedious negotiating structure it would have been surprising if any progress was made in those first few sessions.

For the Americans who are co-sponsoring these talks they needed to stay away to give the bilateral talks a chance to work. The U.S.

philosophy seems to be a non-loser. If the two sides can reach an agreement good; if they fail to find mutually acceptable concessions then the U.S.'s attempt to interfere/mediate/persuade will not be an unwanted intrusion but a necessity for the success of the talks.

In first two weeks of December the Arab-Israeli talks did not get much publicity. But two clear images were developed by the average American and for that matter anyone following the talks. The first image was that of the Arab side going to the talks regularly and on time without a hint of wanting to pull out. The Israel side on the other hand clearly left the opposition impression. They failed to show up on Dec. 4 as stipulated in the invitation and they were constantly talking about leaving.

The U.S. accommodated Israel to the extreme it did not allow photos of empty chairs, did not much condemn Israeli practices in the occupied territories and rescinded the Zionism-is-racism resolution during this period. But few believe that the last of the American positions has not been seen. No one expects that a small country like Israel rebuffing the invitation by the most powerful country on Earth will get

away with it for long. As the American saying goes he who laughs last laughs best. The U.S. undoubtedly prefers to make its fight over an issue of substance which the Bush administration knows it can win — something like the settlement issue.

Palestinian accomplishments in the Israeli circle are also not to be diminished. For 40 years Israelis have been told morning, afternoon and evening that the Arab World refuses to recognize its existence that there is no one to talk to and that the Palestinian statements recognising Israel was no more than a public relations ploy.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Now the Israeli public has seen the Arab countries and Palestinians willing to talk about peace with Israeli officials. Arab delegates showed up every scheduled day for talks on time and left when the sessions were over and made sure that a new date was set before breaking off the first Washington round of talks. It does not take much to get Israelis to realize that what they had been told by their leaders for so many years is just not holding up. Sure they are still sceptical. Some still think that the Arabs have discovered a new

publicity ploy. But with every day passing and after every meeting taking place it becomes more and more difficult to convince average Israelis that there is no one to talk to.

Israelis also will find their governments position on the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to be rather hypocritical. They know that the PLO is playing a key role in these talks. They know that the head of the Palestinian delegation was the vice chairman of the first PLO conference. They know the extent of PLO loyalty among the delegates. They know that Faisal Hussein and Haniyeh met with the PLO on numerous occasions and that the Palestinian delegations is in constant touch with the PLO. They know that two PLO members Akram Haniyeh and Tayser Amri are staying on the same floor of the hotel where the Palestinians were staying in and that they are in constant meeting with the delegation. Furthermore, Israelis understand that the Palestinian nationalists are meeting with Peace Now Israelis but with representatives of one of the most hardline Israeli governments. If Yitzhak Shamir's people meet with these PLO Palestinians then the PLO can't be that bad, many Israelis are arguing.

The changes that are taking place in American and

Israeli society are quite important. Many Palestinians however feel that the Palestinian leadership is not putting enough effort planning and execution in maximising the possibilities in these two important areas. By and large Palestinian planning has been haphazard. This was the situation, in Washington. Plans prepared a month in advance of the delegation's arrival by expert Arab-American leaders were scrapped as the delegation was sometimes led by amateurs who wanted to take credit for organising this or that meeting irrespective of whether it was the best way to utilise the Palestinian delegation. Similarly Palestinian policies regarding how to win over the Israeli public have at best been unplanned and spontaneous. Palestinian strategists have indicated in recent days that unless the PLO and the Palestinian leadership in the occupied territories gives these issues their top priority progress on winning both the American and Israeli public will be slow and painful. They suggest that special departments headed by senior leaders must be established to put up plans and work on executing them. Some are suggesting that such plans must be prepared for execution by the time the next round of talks begins in Washington on Jan. 7.

Iraqis grapple with daily life with little thought of Christmas

By Mariam M. Shabbat

Jordan Times Staff Reporter

BAGHDAD — "Celebrate? Celebrate what?" this was the response of Mansour, a 29-year-old Iraqi Christian, when asked how he would celebrate Christmas this year.

The response is a true reflection of Iraqi feelings as the country prepared to celebrate its second Christmas under siege.

Rising prices, unemployment — which in some areas is as high as 70 per cent — the continued ostracism by the world community and lack of food and medicine will not make this a merry anything.

The economic situation in Iraq is perplexing to many observers. In the city of Baghdad districts of Karada and Mansour luxury items and imported foods are in abundance. At private pharmacies and in the home of the very wealthy most medicines are also available. But these two neighbourhoods are not Baghdad and certainly not Iraq.

In Iraq as everywhere, it is the poor who suffer and in Iraq, the poor whose ranks are quickly swelling, are suffering most.

The high inflation rate and the worthless value of the dinar, at the moment 10 to the U.S. dollar in the black market — have inflicted one shock wave after another on the Iraqis.

The markets are full with produce and some of the government stores have now added frozen chicken to their supply of basic food staples. Most Iraqis are not starving. "But that can hardly be a criteria," one relief official

pointed out.

Through a government food distribution system, every Iraqi family is assured of at least one week's supply of basic foodstuffs at the cost of 12 Iraqi dinars. A month's salary averages at 200 dinars.

The rest of a family's diet has to be bought on the open market. The prices are too high for the vast majority. Extras, garnishings and even basic foodstuffs such as a kilo of meat, once a week, are not easily attainable for most people.

The new merchant classes and war profiteers enjoy the fruits of their efforts at home and at large hotels, where Christmas bazaars and fashion shows sent shock waves through many parts of Baghdad.

A member of President Saddam Hussein's family looked on with disapproval as he saw many wealthy Iraqis enjoying the holiday activities at the "famous" Rashid Hotel.

"Those who see this would think there were no sanctions on Iraq, they would think the people were not suffering," he said.

Indeed to outside observers Baghdad looks gloomy but not defeated. Only in the homes and in private conversations do Iraqis "let go" and speak their minds.

The stifling economic situation at home, the lack of public freedom and above all inability of the West to show any sign of mercy on the people have embittered many people to the core.

"Let them spend, let them live," said Mona, 37, of the rich Iraqis at the hotel. "Tomorrow may never

come." "For us life is a carousel, it goes up and down," Mona explained. "When we were all well off, there were a lot of restrictions on imports. Our stores were very bare. Today we have no money but our stores are full. That is very funny."

While basic items are barely attainable, average Iraqi private merchants, who have been given a green light by the Baghdad government, are busy importing vast quantities of foodstuffs, and luxury items, mostly alcohol and cigarettes.

Those who have friends or relatives abroad are getting vital medicines, but the average Iraqis who suffer from relatively mild diseases like diabetes or epilepsy are not able to get their badly needed medicines.

Heart and cancer patients are dependent on the good-will of charitable and relief organisations.

The U.N. decision to defer discussions on the lifting of sanctions for another two months came just in time for Christmas.

The growing percentage of poor are still eating, eating what is another question. The rich are getting visibly richer and for those who say that the sanctions will go only if Saddam Hussein goes, they have a long wait in store.

It may even be, as one European relief organiser put it, "the U.N. and Mr. Bush will have some rich people left in Iraq if the sanctions are prolonged for a long time. They will have some rich people and over 17 million people that are just shadows."

'Kidnap kingpin' reportedly in Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — The reputed leader of the extremists who held scores of Westerners hostage in Lebanon has moved to Tehran, apparently for safety, after freeing the last of his captives, according to a knowledgeable Shiite source.

Imad Mughniyeh, already wanted by the United States for air piracy, left Lebanon for the Iranian capital some time before the Dec. 4 release of the last American hostage, journalist Terry Anderson, the source said. The informant, who has close contacts with Shiite fundamentalists in Lebanon, spoke on condition of anonymity. His information has in the past been accurate.

Abdul Hadi Hamadi, leader of a Shiite clan allied to Mughniyeh which is believed to be holding the last two Western hostages, was also in Tehran recently but returned to Beirut, the source reported.

The Sunday Times of London Dec. 8 quoted Israeli intelligence sources as saying that 30 to 40 of the kidnapers had fled to Iran for protection and new identities.

The Shiite source could not confirm that. But he said that Mughniyeh, a 29-year-old Lebanese, moved his wife Saada, 28, and two children, Fatima, 7, and Mustafa, 4, to Tehran in September.

That was when the final phase of the hostage saga got underway with negotiations by U.N. mediator Giandomenico Picco to free the remaining captives in Lebanon.

The source said Mughniyeh's family appeared to be settling in for a long stay in the Iranian capital.

"The children have been installed in school," he noted.

Mughniyeh was for years chief of security with Lebanon's Hizbollah, the Iranian-backed fundamentalist faction considered the parent organisation for the hostage-holding groups.

Western intelligence officials say Mughniyeh heads Islamic Jihad, considered Hizbollah's strike arm and tightly linked with other kidnap groups.

His current status with Hizbollah is not known. In recent years he has been a regular visitor to Tehran and travels on an Iranian passport.

He and his lieutenants have long been considered prime targets for U.S., Israeli, French and British intelligence agencies.

While Mughniyeh and his allies held hostages, these agencies made no apparent moves against them for fear that the captives would be harmed.

Whether that has changed is not clear. But Mughniyeh's reported move to Tehran, where he can claim protection from Iran's anti-Western radicals, appear to indicate that with no more captives he does not feel secure in Lebanon now.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker refuses to say if the Bush administration will go after the kidnapers. But he noted Dec. 8 that "we view the chapter as not finished."

Details of the agreement worked out by Mr. Picco with the kidnap factions are not known. Shiite sources noted that the kidnapers' demanded immunity from arrest and security for themselves and their families once all hostages were freed.

As far as is known, the United States refused to grant the kidnapers any form of immunity, Lebanese and Syrian sources say.

President George Bush stressed after Mr. Anderson's release that he hoped the extremists who kidnapped 17 Americans between 1984 and 1988 will eventually "be brought to justice."

Three of those Americans were killed or died in captivity. Two apparently escaped and the rest were all released.

The U.S. Justice Department issued an arrest warrant for Mughniyeh and three other Shiite fundamentalists in 1985, naming them as suspects in the hijacking of a TWA airliner in June that year.

In that episode, the hijackers killed a U.S. navy diver and held 39 Americans hostage for 17 days before Syrian intervention freed them.

Hungarian police hunt 2 after attack on emigres

BUDAPEST (Agencies) — Hungary tightened security along its borders on Tuesday in a hunt for two men suspected of bombing a coach carrying Soviet Jewish emigres in Budapest.

The 28 passengers on the coach were unhurt but two Hungarian policemen were seriously wounded by the remotely controlled car bomb on a road near Budapest airport on Monday.

Israeli Ambassador David Kraus, who warned that Israel would retaliate for the attack, visited the men in hospital on Tuesday.

Police said two dark-skinned men who left the scene of the explosion by car were being sought.

Identity checks on people leaving Hungary were stepped up at border crossings, intensifying delays caused by heavy Christmas traffic across central Europe.

Border guard spokesman János Zubeck said crossing by road into Yugoslavia could take up to 15 hours and into Romania up to 20 hours.

The group of Soviet Jews had arrived in Budapest by train and were being driven to a secret transit camp to await a flight to Israel when the explosion happened.

It was the first such incident since Budapest became the main staging post for Jews leaving the Soviet Union after the Kremlin relaxed its emigration policy in 1989.

More than 100,000 Soviet Jews have passed through the Hungarian capital.

The U.S. State Department Monday condemned a pair of apparent terrorist attacks occurring in Budapest since last Thursday, including the attack on the bus.

Iraq says Washington plotting use of force

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Iraq's foreign minister says President George Bush is plotting new military action against Baghdad and is sponsoring a coup attempt against President Saddam Hussein, according to documents circulated Monday.

In a letter to the United Nations, Ahmad Hussein Khudayer cited an Oct. 4 new conference by President Bush and a New York Times report of Dec. 11 to support his assertion that Washington is trying to foment a military coup.

The New York Times article said that the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff were reviewing to "prepare the United States for a situation in which key officers in Iraq's armed forces might request support from Washington in an attempt to seize power from President Saddam Hussein."

The article said two options were under consideration: One in which a coup attempt bogged down and U.S. assistance was requested, and another in which officers told Washington they were ready to launch a coup if they received U.S. military support.

Mr. Khudayer noted Mr. Bush's Oct. 4 statement that "I should like to see Saddam Hussein out of power so that we can normalise our relations with the Iraqi people."

Mr. Khudayer said these reports and statements are "indicative both of preparations for the use of armed force against Iraq and of incitement of members of the Iraqi armed forces to revolt against the existing authority."

"We nevertheless have confidence in our people and our armed forces and in their patriotism and fair-mindedness," he said.

He told the Security Council and the secretary-general that "a sense in the face of such perverse policies" and a one-sided, anti-Iraq attitude by U.N. officials "will have dire consequences for the United Nations."

He did not elaborate, but Iraqi officials have often said that the anti-Iraq policies of the Security

Council have shown the developing nations that the United Nations has been converted into a tool of U.S. policy.

Kurds give 'last chance'

The Kurdistan Front, an umbrella group for eight Kurdish parties, has decided to send a delegation to Baghdad in a "last bid" for a compromise to end a painful economic blockade, according to a Kurdish official.

Dr. Kemal Fasad, the chief representative of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, said in the northern Iraqi town of Shaqlawa that the decision had been taken unanimously at a meeting held in nearby Khalifan on Sunday.

"We have decided to respond to the Iraqi request and send the coordination committee for the last time to Baghdad to go and see what Iraq is going to do about lifting the blockade," he said.

He said the delegation to be sent shortly "will not stay in Baghdad for more than a week this time." The coordination committee has unsuccessfully negotiated an end to the blockade several times in the past.

Iraq stopped sending food and fuel to Kurdish areas, suspended municipal services and halted wage payments to Kurdish civil servants in November. The steps have spurred acute fuel shortages with gasoline prices rising steeply.

Intermittent shelling and the economic blockade were generally seen as an Iraqi stratagem to force the Kurds to make concessions on their demands in the deadlocked talks for autonomy.

If the Iraqi government lifts the blockade, Kurdish officials would consider resuming the negotiations, Dr. Fasad said.

The autonomy talks bogged down three months ago over the size and borders of a projected autonomous area.

Of 1.5 million Kurds who fled to Turkey and Iran after a failed rebellion in March, most were resettled by a U.S.-led Western force. However about 500,000 unable to return to towns under Iraqi control still need shelter.

U.N. urges Cypriot agreement

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council on Monday called on all parties in Cyprus to conclude an agreement that would end the division of the island and attend an international conference to meet this objective.

The council endorsed a recent report from Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar that reported progress in settling the dispute but at the same time admitted a solution was nowhere in sight.

The United States last August said an international conference between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots would take place in September if adequate progress was made by then.

But Washington too was unsuccessful.

At Monday's council meeting, U.S. envoy Alexander Watson said Washington would resume its efforts in the region in during the first week of January, saying "we see an opportunity to make progress on a framework agreement."

Turkish Cypriots contend they are a people with a right to self-determination while the United Nations designates the two sides as a community.

Turkish Cypriots in 1963 proclaimed their own republic. It is recognised only by Turkey whose troops occupied 37 per cent of the island in 1974 in response to a short-lived coup in Nicosia engineered by the military junta then ruling Greece.

The United Nations has sought to obtain agreement on a federal system of government to reunite the island.

Security Council deadlocked on Western Sahara report

UNITED NATIONS (R) — The Security Council was deadlocked Monday over a U.N. report about who will be eligible to vote in a referendum on the future of Western Sahara following allegations from non-aligned states that the document was slanted towards Morocco.

A United Nations-sponsored ceasefire came into force on Sept. 6 as part of a plan for a referendum in 1992 giving the inhabitants the choice between independence and integration with Morocco.

The council took the unusual step in not giving immediate approval to the report from Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and instead requested further consultations.

The issue could be delayed until 1992 when the new secretary-general, Boutros Ghali, takes office and reviews the controversy.

The U.N. mission has been plagued with problems in carrying out its mandate since the September ceasefire and the Polisario Front, which seeks independence for the former Spanish colony, has accused it of violating its neutrality.

The head of the mission, Johannes Manz of Switzerland, recently resigned and a replacement has not yet been named.

In turn Morocco, which gets a seat on the Security Council in 1992, has criticised U.N. staff of planning a referendum without having properly settled voter guidelines.

Diplomats said five non-aligned nations blocked approval of the report, saying the parties involved had to agree on voting criteria. If Polisario was dissatis-

fied, the report could not be accepted.

"Consequently, China was to have said the report could only be approved by agreement from all 15 council members."

The key issue between the two sides, which has led to several months' delay in implementing the plan, is who should be allowed to take part in the referendum.

This is complicated by the multi-ethnic nature of Western Saharan society and the ebb and flow of people across borders.

Under the U.N. plan, an identification commission has been working on the basis of a 1974 Spanish census which counted more than 73,000 inhabitants.

The disputed report recommends voting be extended to those who have a father born in the territory and those who had intermittent residence of 12 years prior to Dec. 1, 1974.

Polisario accuses Morocco of bringing thousands of supporters into the territory to stack the vote and it favours the new guidelines as favouring Rabat.

In a statement Polisario said that if the recommendations were adopted they would bring "the definitive burial of the peace plan and total failure to the United Nations in its decolonisation work in the Western Sahara."

The commission has been updating the census by taking account of births, deaths and population movements.

JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 667171

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Le Monde en 60s
18:15 News in French
19:15 Documentary
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 After Henry
21:30 Voice at the Planet
22:00 News in English
22:30 Law and Order

PRAYER TIMES

6:54 Fajr
12:26 (Summer) Dhuhr
14:12 Asr
16:36 Maghrib
17:36 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swatish, Tel. 810740
Archdiocese of God Church, Tel. 637785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrence Church Tel. 622556

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 623383, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 771361

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 683326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811265

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 649432

Church of the Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be cloudy and rainy and a drop in temperature is expected. Winds will be southwesterly fresh in Amman, winds will be southerly fresh and calm. Mt. Jebel Jouf.

Amman 5/10
Aqaba 11/18
Dahesh 3/13
Jordan Valley 10/16

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 20. Humidity readings: Amman 51 per cent, Aqaba 15 per cent.

NIGHT DUTY

AMBULANCE
Dr. Basim Qaddoussi 646024
Dr. Abdul Majed Shaw 791405
Dr. Ahmad Samir 782118
Dr. Abdul Aziz Tabom 787708
First pharmacy 641972
Ferdous pharmacy 776336
Al-Salam pharmacy 877035
Nasrallah pharmacy 626672
Al-Salam pharmacy 636738
Yasouf pharmacy 644943
Simanet pharmacy 637680

REPAIRS

Dr. Ahmad Abu Baker (-)
Dr. Al-Salam pharmacy (787625)

REPAIRS

Dr. Hisham Hiyat (-)
Khalaf pharmacy 985417

REPAIRS

Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 892228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 643402
Traffic Police 865590
Public Security Department 630321
Police Complaints 605000
Police Complaints 661176
Water and Sewage 6632737
Complaints 6632737
Amman Municipality 771013
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010239
Central Amman Telephone Repair 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repair 661101
Jordan Television 771112
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

HOSPITALS

Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

FOR THE TRAVELLER

AMMAN: Hamad Medical Centre 813813/32
Khadija Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Al-Jahat Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jahat Amman Maternity 642362
Mafham, J. Amman 626140
Palatine, Shalal 641714
Shalal Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Mansour Hospital 6672719
The Islamic, Al-Jahat 6632737
Al-Ahli, Al-Jahat 6641646
Islamic, Al-Muhajir 771013
Al-Banki, J. Ashraf 775112/25
Amry, Marfa 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/0
Zamil Hospital 674155

AMMAN: Zuma Govt. Hospital (09)83333
Zuma National Hospital (09)505050
Rm Sam Hospital (09)88732
Al-Hana Modern Hospital (09)88732

Other: Damascus (RJ) 09-53200
Jeddah (RJ) 09-53200
Dhahran (RJ) 09-53200
Laraca (RJ) 09-53200
Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ) 09-53200
New York, Amsterdam (RJ) 09-53200
Istanbul (RJ) 09-53200
Madrid, Rome (RJ) 09-53200

Princess Basma Hospital (02)272555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272555

Bn Al-Hafes Hospital (02)274710

AQA: Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

Archbishop of Canterbury to pay 2-day visit to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey will pay a two-day official visit to Jordan on Jan. 3 during which he will meet with government and church officials.

The archbishop, who is expected to be accompanied by his wife and other church officials, will be inspecting a number of institutions in Jordan. These include a school for the deaf in Salt, the Schneider Vocational School at Marka, Al Ahliah Girls School and the Bishop School in Amman.

The archbishop will be going to Jerusalem and the occupied Arab territories from Amman on an inspection tour of schools and hospitals run by church and charitable institutions in Gaza, Nablus, Jerusalem, Ramallah, Nazareth and Haifa.

According to a press release by the Episcopal Church here, the archbishop's discussions and tours are aimed at promoting the peace process and justice in the Holy Land and the Middle East region.

It said that the visit is also considered as the archbishop's pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jerusalem.



DIPLOMATIC MISSION "COCKTAIL RECEPTION" — The Amman Marriott Hotel held its annual Diplomatic Cocktail Reception on December 8th, 1991. Approximately 300 members from the diplomatic mission in Amman attended the reception. Francis Keenan, the general manager of the Amman Marriott, and the Marriott team thanked their guests from the diplomatic mission for their support and cooperation.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art and ornamentation exhibition by Sabah Hadidi at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Jumana Al Hussein at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- ★ Exhibition of ceramics by Iraqi artist Salam Jamil Al Noori at Alfa Art Gallery.

LECTURE

- ★ Lecture, in Arabic, entitled "The Influence of the Intifada on the Contemporary Palestinian Political Thought" by Faisal Hammad, at the Scientific and Cultural Centre of Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation — 6 p.m.

POETRY

- ★ Poetry recital by Munira Mishah at the Phoenix Art and Culture Gallery — 6 p.m.

Jordan explains its stand

(Continued from page 1)

adopt such a confidence-building measure. Voting for the repeal of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3379 could have been another such measure; but is the participation of both parties not central to the concept of negotiations?

The question relevant to the survival of the Palestinian people, and therefore the Arab states negotiating with Israel, is not whether Zionism is a racist philosophy, but whether Israel as a state exercises policies based on racial or religious discrimination. The facts on the ground point to continuous oppression of Palestinians in respect of personal and political rights, the allocation of resources, and the fundamental question of identity. Israeli construction of settlements in the occupied territories continues unabated, alongside the menacing confiscation of land.

These measures, accompanied by a fresh crackdown on Palestinians in the occupied territories, violate both international law and the democratic principle of non-discrimination. For Jordan's part, therefore, the status of Zionism as a political or cultural philosophy is not at issue; the policies of the state of Israel are.

Jordan believes in the need for joint answer to the challenges of the region, answers based on true peace-making. Jean Monnet, the founding father of European integration, contrasted two models of negotiations. In a conventional model, the sides face each other across the negotiating table. But in a true peace-making process, all parties are on the same side, facing together their common challenge on the other side of the table. In the context of ongoing, substantive peace negotiations, an end to the Israeli policies self-avowedly based on criteria of race and religion would greatly ease in transition from the conventional, unproductive, model of negotiation, to a true peace-making process.

Bethlehem marks another Christmas

(Continued from page 1)

her leaflet from uprising leaders urging them to open, as well as similar advice by Mayor Freij.

"Some called for a strike, some called for us to open... so we are open," said Joseph Tabash, owner of a souvenir store.

Mr. Freij issued a Christmas statement urging a peace where Jews and Arabs can live "without fear, without hatred and without quarrelling."

"The message of Bethlehem is peace on earth... we pray and hope that next year there will be peace in the Middle East," he said.

Scores of tour buses began arriving shortly after 8 a.m. (0600 GMT) in Manger Square, and lines formed in the Church of the Nativity, as pilgrims awaited to go down into the grotto where tradition holds Christ was born.

Gulf Arab leaders ponder defence

(Continued from page 1)

for the occasion.

A senior Libyan envoy, Ahmad Gaddafi Al Dam, arrived with a message from his leader Muammar Qadhafi.

Diplomats said he was probably seeking GCC intervention in Tripoli's row with the West over charges Libyan agents were behind the downing of an American airliner over Scotland.

Underlining Tehran's keenness to be included in GCC affairs, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati sent an envoy with a message for its rulers on the eve of the summit.

Tehran had no official comment on Tuesday but Iranian newspapers saw little in the summit to cheer about.

The hardline Jomhuri Eslami said GCC states could improve ties with Iran by first apologising for their backing of Iraq in the 1980-88 war.

Pointing to Gulf Arab states' separate defence pacts with the United States, Britain and France, the English-language Kayhan International said even if asked, Iran was unlikely to "join any configuration which includes alien powers."



EXCEPTIONAL STARGAZER — Jordanian astronomer Abdul Rahman Rader was honoured Monday by the Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation (AHSF) and the Jordanian Astronomers Society (JAS) for his efforts in the field of astronomy and his part in the establishment of the Jordanian society. AHSF Board Chairman Abdul Majid Shoman delivered the key address at the ceremony, paying tribute to the endeavours of Dr. Rader and his pioneering work in the field in the Kingdom. Society member Khalil Qumail made a speech outlining the works and writings of Dr. Rader, focusing on his education and his skills. The AHSF director, Asaad Abdul Rahman, announced that the foundation was making an annual financial contribution to the society to promote its work and its efforts in Jordan.

Minister inaugurates new mosque

IRBID (Petra) — Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi Tuesday inaugurated Al Faiba mosque, located in an old Irbid parking complex.

Sheikh Khatib conveyed the greetings of King Hussein to the audience and said that building the mosque is one of the greatest works Muslims do. He noted that the building of mosques has far-reaching effects on Muslims and contributes to spreading the message of Islam.

He pointed out that mosques are extremely important because they graduated the Muslim scholars and ulamas who raise the banner of Islam.

The minister stressed that mosques have a major role in



Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi

unifying Muslim ranks, saying that they served as centres of intellectual, cultural and social radiation. He thanked Al Faiba Charitable Society for building the mosque.

Hamdi Tabba'a chairman of the Faiba Charitable Society, thanked the Awqaf minister for inaugurating the mosque on His Majesty's behalf and thanked Irbid municipality for donating the plot of land on which the mosque was built.

The mosque was built on a 2,700-square-metre area, at a cost of JD650,000. It includes a library, a sharia' school, with six classrooms, a residence for the imam of the mosque and an office for the society. The mosque can accommodate up to 2,000 worshippers.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by the Irbid governor, a number of deputies from Irbid, the chairman of the Irbid Municipal Committee and a number of government officials in the governorate.

Artist uses mixture of colours to achieve special effect

By Maha Addasi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Sabah Hadidi's art exhibition at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) is proof that an artist can master several types of art and maintain a special trademark in each.

Mr. Hadidi has done just that in painting, pottery design, painting on cloth and even furniture. Painting is the one area where he has become most involved, especially with the mixing of colours.

"I don't just mix colours in the usual way. I make them from natural products and use chemicals to create the stable forms I want. I use different bases to get water colours or oil colours," Mr. Hadidi said, adding that he studied the chemistry of colours for one year.

The colours used are surprisingly vivid with blues, purples and intense pinks, to name a few examples of shades that are totally unexpected when

referring to colours made up of "sand and other natural products."

The paintings are attention grabbing from the angle of subjects drawn because there is more to each painting than meets the eye.

ART REVIEW

The observer can look at one of these works and see a typical painting of scenery with its distant mountains and various shades of sand, but on further analysis realise that the landscape is really a human body and the contours are body parts.

The other forms of art include a great degree of taste. Mr. Hadidi combines the pottery and the cloth designs to make matching sets with similar colours and designs on both.

Much like most to his works,

Mr. Hadidi's pottery is not the typical clay base with the polished surface and painted design. The pots he uses are made of glass and then covered with a solid base colour before a final Islamic-type design is placed on it. The designs with their typical squared off edges are in deep contrast with the curved pots they are on and give the work a special characteristic.

The furniture section of the exhibition includes tables and mirrors which are carefully painted with a solid base colour and vivid designs. The designs are mainly geometric, but the choice of bright colours to complement each other is where the talent lies.

The colours used are reminiscent of poster colours with their fluorescent hues, but the designs are so delicate that the brightness adds to the work rather than makes it seem harsh.

The exhibition will continue until Dec. 30.

ESCWA research highlights economic vulnerability of area

AMMAN (J.T.) — A biennial research conducted by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) says recent developments in the region have highlighted the vulnerability of its countries.

The exposure of both surplus and deficit countries results from their heavy dependence either on oil revenues or on the expatriate labour remittances, the research found.

The countries of the Western Asia region require measures like the diversification of their economic systems and the reinforcement of the intra-regional economic relations as well as interdependence to overcome the present difficulties, the research found.

Following are the research's main points:

The Gulf crisis proved yet again that development and progress in the region are dependent on peace and political stability. Unfortunately, development prospects have been seriously disrupted by the diversion of huge resources to finance armament, as well as, the massive destruction of social and economic infrastructure in Lebanon, Iraq and Kuwait.

According to the same document, the region's dependence on imports of its basic needs, namely food, from the industrialised countries are yet another proof of the region's vulnerability.

The Gulf crisis caused, besides the serious economic problems, a disastrous social quake in most of the ESCWA member states. The Gulf countries and Iraq provided until before the war the most important labour market that offered job opportunities to the massive active population of the labour sending countries. The waves of returnees estimated to 2 million put the non-oil-producing countries face to face with an inextricable crisis: the absorption of the returnees and the decline in the remittances of these migrant workers, notes ESCWA research.

The absorption of the returnees, which will take years before being partly solved, will largely depend on adequate regional and international financial and technical assistance, according to the ESCWA document.

As far as the financial conditions are concerned, it is stated that the budgetary imbalances and recessionary trends in the Gulf sub-region throughout the

1980s have drastically reduced the necessary traditional aid ESCWA-rich countries used to grant to the poor ones. As a result, countries like Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Yemen had no choice but to contract additional debt to the extent that debt-repayment and servicing hindered seriously their development prospects. In order to meet their debt obligations, these countries had to reduce their investments and embark on difficult economic adjustment programmes, the research found.

The achievement of the European Single Market constitutes another challenge to the ESCWA region states in the coming years. In order to respond to this development, they have to come economically closer. While past experience to promote regional cooperation has not been encouraging in general, new efforts will be needed to transcend differences and safeguard the region's interests.

The political stability — a favourable context for economic and social development — will partly depend on the outcome of the negotiations between the Arabs and Israel, concludes the ESCWA research.

Organisations to help returnees deal with housing, other problems

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan office of the charity organisation Human Appeal International (HAI) has just announced plans to be carried out in cooperation with the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) to offer assistance to the Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates returning from Kuwait.

"We will start a charity programme whose objective will be to pay a six-month rent for the returnees to Jordan to help them get shelter, which is in great demand here at present," said a HAI statement.

The decision to provide the assistance followed a study conducted by the National Centre for Research and Development which reported that 11.1 per cent of the returnees are facing difficulties in finding housing or paying for homes they had rented, said the statement.

The statement quoted the study as noting that 47 per cent of the returnees reside in homes

they own, whereas 42 per cent have to pay rent and 11 per cent live with friends and relatives.

The statement pointed out that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) operating in Jordan have conducted a house-to-house search for needy returnee families and interviewed 500 of these families living in Amman, Zarqa and Irbid. Nearly 20 per cent of those interviewed face the prospect of being expelled from their rented homes because of their failure to pay rent, averaging JD 55 a month, the statement noted.

It said that the NGOs in Jordan have embarked on a project to find needy returnee families through visits to schools in the three cities and have been examining cases of students who could not pay fees for their education.

It said that volunteers visited families, interviewing their members with a view to finding out their basic needs. Out of 500 families, 98 per cent said that bonioing was their major headache.

According to the statement,

the HAI will be charged with the distribution of the contributions to the beneficiaries.

The statement quoted Javier de Riedmatte, head of the UNHCR office in Jordan, as saying that the project aims at relieving the returnees of part of the burden they shoulder.

The statement said that the contribution for the rent, which comes from the UNHCR, was in response to appeals issued by the Jordanian government to the NGOs to help Jordan deal with this socio-economic problem.

The UNHCR representative expressed the hope that other NGOs would follow the example of his organisation and provide funds and finance projects to ease the burden on the Jordanian economy.

The HAI's regional office director, Bahaadin Shanabli, said that the problem of the returnees was assuming a dimension at the national Jordanian level since the influx of the returnees has had adverse effects on the social and economic life of Jordan.



Aref Al Bataineh
WHO, Health Ministry to promote community medicine

AMMAN (J.T.) — The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Health Ministry Tuesday opened a three-month training seminar designed to promote the concept of community medicine in Jordan.

The seminar was opened by Health Minister Aref Al Bataineh, who noted that the participants would be taking 17 courses in various aspects of community medicine in addition to a three-month practical training course.

Dr. Bataineh paid tribute to the WHO regional office for its continued support to the health activities in Jordan and he also thanked Jordanian universities for their continued support for the Health Ministry's endeavours.

Dr. Bataineh underlined the importance of this seminar for Jordan which, he said, lacks the specialisation needed to raise the level of health services and provide protection to the general health environment.

A group of leading professors from Syrian, Egyptian and Jordanian universities as well as the American University of Beirut, along with experts and specialists from the Health Ministry, will give lectures during the training seminar.

Physicians and specialists employed by the Health Ministry are attending the seminar and taking part in the practical training course.



Happy New Year!

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Home News in Brief

Prime minister to attend Parliamentary session

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament will hold a meeting this morning under the chairmanship of House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat and in the presence of Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and cabinet members. The meeting is expected to include the government's replies to questions by House members and discussion of the Financial Committee's decision No. 4 on Al Mafrqa, the Court Draft Law for 1990 and the 1990 Karak Municipality Draft Law.

ESCWA, ATF sign agreement

AMMAN (Petra) — The Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) have signed an agreement whereby the ATF will carry out studies on changes and potential economic and social effects on the Middle East and ESCWA area of operations as a result of the peace process. ESCWA sources said Tuesday. The sources added that ESCWA's medium-term plan will be reconsidered with a view to taking into account the latest developments resulting from the Gulf crisis.

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Think differently

IT APPEARS that the ongoing Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) summit in Kuwait is being guided by old illusions that belong to bygone eras. With security arrangements and the formation of huge armies heading the list of issues on the agenda of the GCC meeting in Kuwait, the leaders of these six Arab countries give the unfortunate impression that the message and implications of the new world order have yet to dawn on them. Surely it must have soaked in the minds of the Arab Gulf states that in the wake of the Gulf crisis the probability of any state invading another has become so remote; that this is one of the main pillars of the new order. That does not suggest that the Gulf states should lay down their arms or delete any reference to their defence needs. Rather they need not exaggerate such issues at the expense of other pressing needs, notably the development of democratic institutions in their midst and the expansion of their economic cooperation to reach other Arab states which are less endowed.

Furthermore, if we recall that the post-World War I era had established a new order on the edifice of the League of Nations and that the post-World War II had ushered in the second new world order based on the United Nations system, surely the post-Gulf crisis, which coincided with the defeat and dismantling of the communist world, can be regarded as the beginning of a new international order characterised less by security concerns and more by economic confrontations among economic giants and blocs. Granted that the rise of nationalism especially in Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union can be the harbinger of more nationalistic eruptions on a global scale and, therefore, would call for suitable security arrangements, still the actuation of security objectives at the expense of other lofty endeavours and goals is shortsighted.

Instead of just looking inward, the GCC leaders should be also thinking in terms of strengthening the Arab League as the best and most potent answer that the Arab World can offer in the face of the new challenges that the new international order has created. At a time when the EC countries are thinking in terms of expanding their unity to comprise Eastern Europe as well, the GCC summiteers should elevate their horizons and reach out for a much more enlightened regional institutions comprising the Arab states in the Middle East and beyond.

Unless the Arabs, rich and poor, think and act as a collective entity vis-a-vis the emerging new world order, they will ultimately find themselves marginalised and further divided as had happened to them in post-World War I and II. With their wealth and with the importance of their region the Arabs should aim at a stronger place in whatever world organisation is going to be constructed, be it the existing U.N. or otherwise. This is far more important than thinking in terms of limited regional alliances or protection provided by foreign powers.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

NO ONE with common sense can expect the world community to reward Israel for its aggression and condone its occupation of Arab land, and no Arab citizen can be pleased with America's appeasement of Israel and its condoning of the Jewish state's actions at the negotiations and in the occupied Arab territories, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Tuesday. The paper said that the U.S. has a serious moral responsibility towards world peace in general and a commitment to end the Arab-Israeli conflict to ensure security and peace in the Middle East in particular. This, said the paper, can be best achieved by forcing Israel to stop its manoeuvres and by starting practical steps aimed at ending its occupation of Arab lands in implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. No one can be satisfied to see the United States adopting a passive attitude vis-a-vis the Israeli actions in the occupied lands and intransigence at the negotiations, the paper continued. It said that Washington should take prompt action now, particularly in light of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's latest statement that the Israeli negotiators are instructed to talk about reaching peace with the Arabs without conceding any land occupied by Israel, the paper said. It said that Washington is called on to take practical steps to ensure real peace and security, otherwise the whole peace process will continue to revolve in a vicious circle.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that the public has the right to know the facts about the peace negotiations, their prospects and the efforts needed to achieve peace. Taher Al Udwan said the negotiations are not a bed of roses or a surgical operation conducted by the negotiators, the two sides bet on Washington's will and its desire to achieve peace for the Middle East region, said the writer. There is no need for excessive optimism, like that which is manifested by a number of officials, because the negotiations process in Washington is not going well at all because of the Israeli intransigence and lack of will, on the part of the United States, to give momentum to the process, he said. The writer said Jordan is participating in the peace process because it indeed, desires to have peace and end Israel's occupation of Arab land and also because of pressure from the Arab world and the international community and in light of the difficult situation in the country, said the writer. But, he said, it is unreasonable to think that we have control over the process or to fool ourselves by saying that the peace process is guaranteed to achieve peace for the region. It is only fair to let people know and realise the fact that nothing is assured and that the Arab demands for the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions can not be guaranteed not only because of Israel's intransigence and the lack of will on the part of the U.S. to force it to comply with the requirements of peace, but also in view of the fact that the Israelis and the Americans are both involved in elections in 1992, at a time when the world is witnessing fast-moving developments and serious changes which distract people's attention from the plight of the oppressed people in the occupied territories, the writer added. He said that the Middle East is nearer to war than to peace and the Arabs have to take this point into consideration as Israel's evil intentions are growing and its ambitions are increasing all the time.

Economic Forum

Composition not consumption matters

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

IT IS right to talk about economic disequilibria in terms of budget, trade, current account and international payments deficits. But it is not correct to talk about the "consumption deficit"; that is meaningless.

Another term used to describe these disequilibria is "gap." Thus we can say budget, trade and balance of payment gaps. When it comes to consumption, an economist should talk about a saving gap, not a consumption deficit or disequilibrium.

With the budget, the trade balance, the current account and the balance of payments we have well-known credit and debit items and hence there are gaps. With consumption, there is no such thing as a gap. But there is a saving gap which refers to the state where available savings fall short of investments, both ex post (actual) or ex ante (planned). If we have adequate savings to finance the required investments it will be foolish to worry about a high level of consumption.

Consumption in the context of policy objectives is such a unique variable. Economics is defined as the science that deals with using economic resources to satisfy the human needs. It follows that consumption is an end in itself. The good justification for restraining consumption is only to boost it later on. Thus constraining consumption is a temporary measure and must only

be applied in this sense. Economic policies which lead to a continuous state of suppressing consumption form examples of outright failure. Saving itself is nothing else than postponed consumption.

And there is more to that. If the produce of farms in the Jordan Valley, the output of factories in Marka and the services of hotels in Aqaba were not consumed by Jordanians, these economic units will close down. Consuming their products generates income for their owners and labourers. The less is the consumption, the less is the generated income. And here lies the uniqueness of consumption, in the sense that it is largely the counterpart of income or the other side of the coin.

But this virtuous relationship works as long as what the Jordanians consume is produced in Jordan. When they consume imported goods and services, Jordanians generate income to pay foreigners for these imports. Buying imported American goods means creating incomes and jobs for American entrepreneurs and workers. Imports are the deepest black hole that devours national income.

It thus follows that there are two types of consumption: one related to domestic products and the second to imports. The first type is productive and therefore need not be discouraged. The

second constrains economic growth and thereby economic development.

The central issue in the management of economic development in the context of consumption is how to boost savings not how to constrain consumption. Curtailing consumption need not necessarily improve savings. Consumption may drop down while savings also plunge rather than rise. This is bound to happen when the drop in consumption is outweighed by a drop in imports which will depress the national income. And when the national income rises, both consumption and savings go up simultaneously.

Thus the crucial formula is to divert more consumption to domestically-produced goods and services. In this case, more consumption means more income and can mean more savings. It actually must mean higher savings except in the very uncommon case where there is a great deal of pent up demand in the national economy. In other words, consumption here does not materialise or increase at the expense of savings.

A higher level of consumption satisfied from domestic production is unquestionably better than a lower level of consumption with a greater import content. It is the composition of consumption which really matters not its level.

For Israel the Zionism vote has a dark lining

By Paul Lewis

The United Nations last week repealed its 1975 resolution defining Zionism as "a form of racism and racial discrimination," but the Israelis on hand for the General Assembly vote were hardly euphoric. Israel's Foreign Minister, David Levy, managed a smile as delegates rushed to shake his hand. But another Israeli official sourly told a well-wisher: "Some people are going to regret this day in a year's time."

Mr. Levy said the repeal had removed "a terrible stain" on the United Nations' record, and American Jewish groups welcomed it as the righting of a wrong done to Israel in the course of the cold war, when the Soviet Union and the United Nations' Third World majority used the organisation as a platform for attacking democracy, capitalism and Western policy in general.

But the Israeli government was noticeably unenthusiastic when Vice President Dan Quayle first called for repeal two years ago — fearing the price America might

ask — although it did warm to the idea when President Bush embraced it earlier this year.

"The United Nations finally put behind it the last major vestige from an era of sterile confrontation, a defamation disguised as diplomacy," said B'nai B'rith's international director, Harris O. Schoengerg. The World Jewish Congress called the vote "a victory for decency."

But when the United States and its Western allies had gone lobbying for repeal among sceptical Third World nations, the argument they used was not just that repeal would correct an injustice that implicitly denied Israel's right to exist. They also insisted it would help the Middle East peace process — and in ways not necessarily to the present Israeli government's liking. The representative of a major European said the argument was put this way: "You're not doing this for Israel. You're doing this to help George Bush make peace."

The United States had, in fact, annoyed many United Nations

members by cutting the organisation out of the peace negotiations at Israel's insistence. Now Washington's representatives could argue that repeal would weaken Israel's dislike for the United Nations, allowing it to play a larger role in implementing whatever settlement may be reached — in aiding returning refugees, for example, or in dividing up water resources. It was also argued that repeal might encourage Israel to take a less jaundiced view of Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which envision an Arab-Israeli peace in which Israel would exchange occupied Arab lands for Arab acceptance of Israel's right to exist within secure boundaries.

"Repeal helps Israel feel like a normal United Nations member, and cooperate with resolutions that will be the basis of any settlement," said Judith Kiper, a Middle East expert at the Brookings Institution.

Israel's spurning of these resolutions, claiming it has already swapped land for peace by giving

Sinai back to Egypt a decade ago, has become an added embarrassment to its friends since the Gulf war, in which the Security Council condemned war with Saddam Hussein precisely because he refused to give up Kuwait.

But for America's European and other allies the main benefit of repeal is their belief that it will strengthen President Bush hand in fending off the pro-Israel lobby in the United States during next year's election campaign and will thus enable him to maintain pressure on Israel to cut a deal with its Arab neighbours.

The timing of America's appeal upset many Muslim countries, which thought the United States had agreed to postpone the issue until the peace talks made more progress.

A shield

American officials say the United States sought repeal now because it had the votes to win. But many experts think it did so in part to deflect criticism of President Bush's recent decision

to delay guaranteeing Israeli loans for resettling Soviet Jewish refugees and to shield the President against further charges of harshness next year. "He is buying time for the negotiations and this was his domestic aim," says Seymour Reich, a past chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations.

Richard E. Murphy, a former Assistant Secretary of State who is now at the Council on Foreign Relations, said "Repeal mainly helps Bush's standing with the American Jewish community, which feels he is too tough on Israel." And William B. Quandt of the Brookings Institution, who as an aide to President Carter helped negotiate the Camp David land-for-peace accord between Egypt and Israel, commented: "Bush wants Israel to feel less isolated. He also doesn't want to be accused of being anti-Israel across the board."

To an extent, American Jewish organisation helped President Bush give himself this shield by showing greater enthusiasm for repeal than did Israel's govern-

ment. "Israel was never an enthusiast because it didn't want to pay a price," noted Alfred H. Moses, President of the American Jewish Committee. "But we were very keen." Mr. Moses said he expects the next "crunch" in Israeli-American relations in February, when he thinks the administration will offer Israel loan guarantees but will link them to a freeze on West Bank settlements.

Meanwhile, the belief that repealing the Zionism-equals-racism resolution would advance the Middle East peace talks has yielded unexpected dividends for both Israel and the United States. Just before the crucial vote, American diplomats were predicting that at most 102 countries would vote in favour, with up to 30 against. In fact, the outcome showed a bigger margin for repeal and the Arabs divided. With 111 countries voting in favour, there were only 25 against, with 13 abstentions and 17 refusing to vote: at all, including six Arab nations — Egypt, Kuwait, Bahrain, Morocco, Tunisia and Oman. — The New York Times



M. Kahil

Discipline — it begins with parents

By Jane E. Brody
New York Times Service

NEW YORK — Few chores of child-rearing are more frustrating or fraught with emotional conflict than discipline. Some researchers believe they know why: Discipline is being applied to children when it should first be applied to their parents.

"Most parents lack a good grasp of what to do when there's a problem," said James Windell, a clinical psychologist in Waterford, Michigan. "Their instincts aren't always useful, and when they rely on their emotions they often end up feeling guilty."

But new findings suggest that it may be surprisingly easy for parents to get out of ineffective disciplinary ruts. Researchers caution that beyond the importance of combining love with limits, there is no one approach that every parent should adopt.

Both children and disciplinary occasions differ, and parents are unconvincing disciplinarians when using a tactic that makes them uncomfortable.

"One size doesn't fit all," said Dr. Carolyn Webster-Stratton, a nurse-practitioner and child psychologist at the University of Washington in Seattle. "Basic disciplinary principles must be tailored to each child and fami-

ly." Before parents can become effective disciplinarians, she said, they must learn how to manage their own anger, solve problem situations and give and get support from others.

The recent findings suggest that most parents, even those who themselves were subjected to harsh discipline, can, with a little help, do a much better job with their own children. These findings, for example, have come out of the studies:

— Simple self-help techniques, with or without professional support, can help parents sharply reduce discipline problems.

— Effective discipline requires parents to be sensitive to their children's needs. Children do not respond positively to discipline unless they feel loved and wanted.

— Praise and love alone are not enough. Too much permissiveness hinders a child's efforts to develop self-control.

— Behaviour problems should be reversed early; waiting until the pre-teen years diminishes chances for success and increases the risk of delinquency and other problems.

— Spanking is not only ineffective, it may erode the child's self-esteem and the parent-child relationship, leading to more problems.

— Studies among hun-

dreds of families at the University of Washington School of Nursing have shown that "parents need to learn as many tricks of the trade as possible, including how to play with their children, communicate with them, praise and reward them and set limits for them, as well as how to handle misbehaviour using a variety of techniques,"

according to Dr. Webster-Stratton, director of the Parenting Clinic there.

The Seattle studies have also shown that instructional videotapes that demonstrate right and wrong ways of handling behaviour problems can teach parents to induce major improvements in the behaviour of their difficult children.

Studies of babies and toddlers directed by Dr. Everett Waters, a psychology professor at the State University of New York at Stony Brook, also showed that young children were more responsive to parental discipline if they could form a secure attachment to the parent.

The child must perceive the parent as "available, responsive, sensitive — sensitive to the baby's signals and able to respond appropriately and in a timely manner," he explained.

However, the so-called permissive approach, in which parents are unconditionally warm and

accepting regardless of what the child does, is "a disaster in the hands of most parents," Dr. Gerald Patterson, an eminent researcher in the field, said.

Follow-up studies of permissive parenting conducted by Dr. Diana Baumrind of the University of California at Berkeley found that the children lacked self-confidence and faced a high risk of developing antisocial behaviour or becoming substance abusers.

Dr. Susan O'Leary, a Stony Brook psychologist, has found that lax parenting is as bad as harsh parenting. Both for teachers and for parents of 2-year-olds, the "timing, tone of voice and length of the reprimand determine its effectiveness," she said.

When a child misbehaves, the reprimand should be immediate, delivered firmly in a neutral tone of voice without yelling or pleading and should be brief. "Don't touch" is better than a 60-word explanation, she said.

Describing classroom experiments, she said: "If the teacher waits too long and lets things build up, a real problem can develop. But if the teacher intervenes right away, things go smoothly. The same is true of parents of 2-year-olds."

— International Herald Tribune (New York Times Service).

LETTERS

Always at your service

To the Editor:

I refer to the letter to the editor "Wingless Hornets" published in the Jordan Times, Dec. 23, in which he complained about delays of up to six months, in receiving mail sent here from Europe and I would like to point out the following:

— In principle, we are always careful to take into consideration any complaint sent to us.

— As to the complaint in question, the director of postal services has paid a visit to the company employing Mr. Craig as manager, who incidentally was not there, and realised the complaint was related to incoming surface mail.

— In this respect, we would like to emphasise that the responsibility for the surface mail lies with the sender. Jordan's responsibility begins from the moment the dispatched item reaches Jordanian territory. Jordan is also responsible to ensure the dispatch of mail originating from Jordan to its destination abroad.

In this connection, we would like to reassure Mr. Craig that the postal services in Jordan send all the outgoing mail by air mail, including mail for which it charges rates for surface mail. We would like to also point out that the Jordanian postal services send through air mail more than 75 mail dispatches on a daily basis and that the Jordanian foreign postal network is considered as one of the widest networks in the Middle East region. Its performance is recognised by the Universal Postal Union as among the best worldwide.

— Though we did not discover any delayed mail destined to Mr. Craig, we admit that his complaint about the delays in the arrival of surface mail to Jordan is justified, especially dispatches sent before and during the Gulf crisis. We would like to point out here that Jordan continues to receive mail that has been delayed for over months after lying idle in the ports of countries where this mail originated, or at sea.

— As we have already pointed out, the delays in these cases lie partly with the countries of origin and partly are due to the very serious circumstances in this region recently.

The Post and Postal Savings Public Corporation would like to assure all citizens that the Jordanian postal services spare no effort in promptly distributing all incoming mail as soon as it reaches Jordan. We can assure you that no delays in the distribution happen here, except when in cases of wrong addresses.

— We would like to express appreciation to Mr. Craig for his remarks and for allowing us to fully explain the Jordanian postal services' responsibilities. We would like to urge Mr. Craig to arrange for his mail to be sent by air to ensure no delays.

Dr. Abdullah Al Jazi

Post and Postal Savings Public Corporation Director

She deserves better

To the Editor:

I read time and again Norma's letter addressed to the editor and published on Dec. 17. I tried hard to call it constructive criticism, but I failed.

We have here a case study of a young and promising reporter trying hard to serve our country and our king.

One would naturally expect constructive guiding criticism. One would hope under the circumstances for a little support and encouragement. But venomous criticism hits beneath the intellect.

It is said that the reviewer did not find it in her to review the efforts of the reporter in a civilised manner.

Wael Attar
Amman - Jordan

Handwritten note: 05.1 11/12/91

Greenland Santa Centre seeks tourist cash, fuels Nordic row

By Tim Pearce
Reuter

COPENHAGEN — Greenland is promoting itself as the "real home" of Santa Claus in a bid to pull in sleds-full of tourist cash.

The Rudolf The Red-Nosed Reindeer Restaurant has just opened in Greenland's capital Nuuk in the first stage of a Christmas entertainment centre that Greenlanders hope will bring tourists flocking.

The new centre seems certain to fuel a simmering row between the normally consensus-loving Scandinavians over which part of their northern lands is Santa's home.

Sweden, Norway and Finnish Lapland already have money-spinning Christmas

centres trading on the image of the jolly, white-bearded old man in red cloak and hat who brings children Christmas presents on his reindeer-drawn sled.

Greenland businessmen and the government are putting \$2 million into their Santa Claus Workshop Centre, which is being developed on a 1,000 square metre (10,760 square feet) site at a disused shipyard.

The Rudolf Restaurant and a market selling locally made yuletide gifts and Eskimo handicrafts mark the start of the Nuuk project drawn up by the Santa Claus of Green-

land Foundation.

By Christmas next year, the centre will be complete, with year-round arts and crafts stalls, exhibitions on Greenland's nature and wildlife, and sleigh rides with real reindeer among the attractions, a foundation official said.

The foundation hopes to earn some \$20 million a year when the centre is finished, bringing in visitors on charter flights, mainly from North America and Japan.

The revenue and the jobs the centre will provide are badly needed by icebound Greenland. The world's

largest island, it has few marketable resources and relies heavily on a \$360 million annual subsidy from its former colonial ruler, Denmark.

Greenland also expects the Santa Centre to increase the flow of letters it receives from children all over the world addressed to Father Christmas, C/O The North Pole, Greenland.

The post office receives 30,000 letters a year, and replies to each one in English, Danish and Eskimo with a Christmas message and a small gift.

The Santa controversy surfaced at a meeting of Nordic

Council prime ministers in Iceland last year when Greenland's then prime minister, Jonathan Motzfeldt, accused Finland of stealing Santa.

The Finns had taken the venerable gentleman from his age-old home at the North Pole in Greenland and moved him to a flat, forested part of Finland that had no connection with Christmas, said Mr. Motzfeldt.

Officials of the Santa Claus Foundation agree. "Everyone knows Santa Claus comes from Greenland — Walt Disney said so," said Marketing Director Preben Larsen.

"The concept of Santa's

workshop was inspired by Disney's cartoon films, which clearly state that the white-bearded figure lives at the North Pole, Greenland."

The Finns have come under attack partly because their six-year-old Santa Centre in the Lapland capital Rovaniemi has proved so successful, attracting more than 500,000 visitors a year. Computers are used to sort the annual deluge of 600,000 letters addressed to Santa from children round the world.

"If Santa had to learn Finnish, he's never have time to fill children's stockings this Christmas," said Greenland's

Larsen, in an acid reference to the difficulty of the Finnish language.

Hostility to Finland resurfaced at the Father Christmas World Congress in Copenhagen in July, where Santas from round the world joined forces to exclude the Rovaniemi interloper.

No less than 104 Santas from as far afield as Russia and Australia donned their red robes and white beards and tucked into traditional Danish Christmas fare, sweltering in summer temperatures of 25 degrees Celsius (77 degrees Fahrenheit).

As well as banning the Finnish Santa, they found time to put together an impromptu Euro-carol, a seasonal ditty combining snippets of traditional Christmas songs from half a dozen of the European Community countries.

Wherever he lives now, Santa's home in the icy north is far removed from his roots in the warmer climate of southern Turkey.

Santa's name is a corruption of Saint Nicholas, born in Antalya on the Mediterranean coast in the third century and for many years bishop of nearby Demre.

Cindy overshadows Santa as Swedish yuletide symbol

By Lars Foyen
Reuter

STOCKHOLM — It wouldn't be Christmas in Sweden without the omnipresent allure of a beauty in sexy lingerie.

For the fourth Christmas running, fashion retailer Hennes Mauritz (HM) is arousing hot emotions, with an underwear model smiling invitingly from thousands of huge billboards all over the country.

The 1991 Christmas lingerie girl is U.S. super model Cindy Crawford, known to the Swedes simply as Cindy.

Feminists steal Cindy posters just to burn them. Men take them home for comfort or as a student prank.

Police worry about how the posters affect traffic safety. Women worry about the effect on their men.

"Advertising always awakes positive and negative emotions and stealing is not uncommon, particularly if the ads depict underwear. The reaction this year has been particularly strong," said HM advertising Manager Joakim Gip.

The posters show Cindy posing against a neutral white background in a wide range of bras, knickers, nightwear and so-called "bodies," resembling bathing suits.

Police said the two towns worst hit by Cindy fever were Malmo in southernmost Sweden, where feminists were tearing her down, and the university town of Linköping, where thieves seemed to be thirsting for female beauty.

"I suspect Ms. Crawford is brightening up the walls of quite a few student dormitories here," said a Linköping Police spokesman.

The posters, which also adorn HM's markets in other parts of Scandinavia, Germany, Switzerland, England and the Netherlands, advertise prices ranging from \$6 for a pair of brief knickers to \$20 for a full "body."

Ms. Crawford is one of the best-paid models in the world. Ms. Gip declined to say how much she was paid for the posters because it was HM policy not to reveal advertising costs.

Ms. Gip said the contrast between a scantily clad beauty and the cold and dark of winter was sure to attract attention.

In Oslo in neighbouring Norway, a traffic commissioner argued that Cindy billboards along the highways were a traffic hazard.

Ms. Gip disagreed: "One professor said Cindy was more likely to sharpen the attention of dozy drivers than to distract them."

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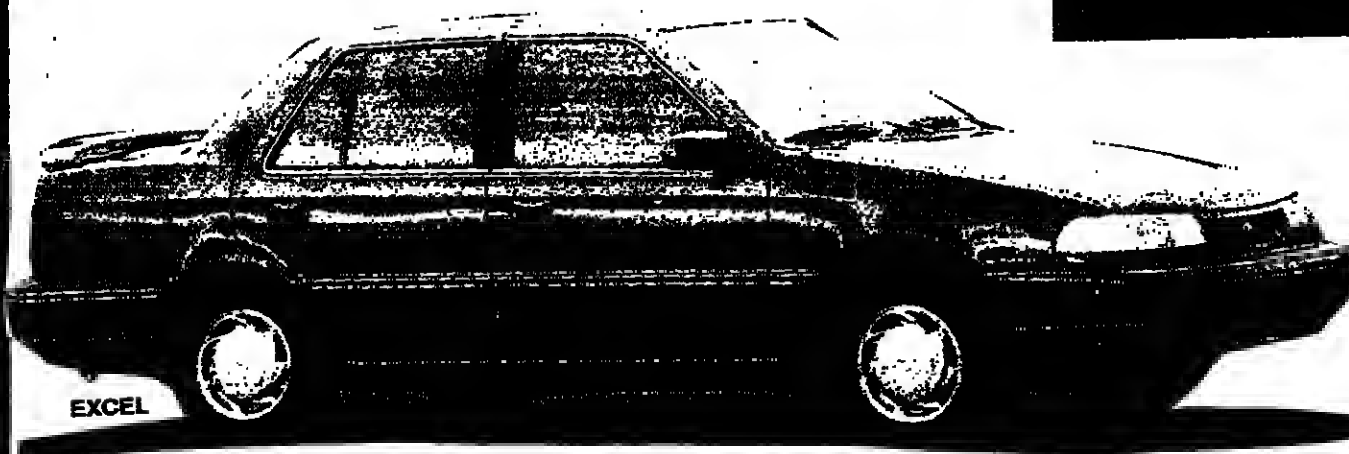
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The vacationers

By Maha Addasi

It is the season for all those students studying abroad to start pouring back home for the Christmas holidays. It is also the season for the parents of those students to arm themselves because the "children" they shall meet at the airport will only slightly resemble the kids they sent off to university only months before.

For example, these visiting children will not complain about the food and they will eat absolutely anything cooked at home without any problem whatsoever. Whereas the kids the parents said good-bye to at the beginning of last semester only picked at their food and had some items on their "menus" that they would not be caught in the same room with, let alone eat.

The discovery about the children's new food habits will be made at the first and possibly the last meal the kid will eat at home, seeing that each kid will already have formed a schedule with his or her friends and it will appear to be a matter of life-or-death if some "outsider," like a parent, for example, would as much as suggest that the schedule be more flexible.

If some flexibility is at all possible, the kid would, or even worse, the mother would suggest that the kid bring his or her friends to the house for meals. At which time your child will bring the "gang" of friends to your house for breakfast, brunch, lunch, snacks, and dinner. While the gang's mothers lie back grateful for a break, thinking that their kids must have gotten smart and found a friend who's a freshman and whose mother has no clue about the hectic timetable she will get.

If you are a parent of a freshman, I suggest you brighten up. If you want to see your kids at all the best time is while they are asleep in their beds.

Otherwise, you could stay up late waiting for the kids to wander in at some ungodly hour and give them a lecture on how worried you are and make it seem like the good old days when you always yelled when they come home late.

Actually, I would skip the lecture on being late because you wouldn't want them with a statement like "But I stayed out all the time when I was at the university and no one stayed up to lecture me." Then they would add that they were out "studying." Just so that you do not "misunderstand" them.

So all in all, you would want to ship the kids back to university, even before their holidays are over seeing that you would not see them anyway.

And because you feel that you are paying for an



aeroplane ticket so that your kids see their friends I suggest that you arrange the ticket so that your kid only transits in Jordan and leaves a few hours later back to the university. Eat that one meal you will get together at the airport.

That is what I would do if I were in your place. But I know your parents out there very well. The minute you see those little monsters' of yours at the airport again you get all mushy and you put up with more than you did in the previous vacation.

So to all you mushy parents. Merry Christmas and good luck for the New Year!

Warbaby

By E. Yaghi

BAGHDAD — The dank icy room smelled like death and mold. Outside the wind howled and a boom of thunder split through the sound of wind and rain which beat fiercely against the small window of Maysoon's two room house. She snuffled, wiped her nose on the sleeve of her dress and stared out at the gray sky and gray buildings lit only by black hollow holes. She sat on a thin mat haphazardly thrown upon a bare cold cement floor. On her lap lay sleeping the ragged tiny infant figure of her only child, Warbaby, a boy. She gently rocked his emaciated frame with her legs and then worriedly looked down at his skeleton like body which was covered by a piece of skin tightly stretched over it. She sighed and said as she looked out the window again: "Where are you Khaled, my husband? Are you dead or alive? Why did you leave me just when I needed you most? I've shed ten thousand tears in misery over you. Soon these tears will turn to blood because I've cried so much. Look at my life, Khaled, I don't know where it's going! Come and see your son before he dies. Warbaby was born in your absence and I swear that when he was born, I heard the echo of your voice in his first tear. Where are you? Are you dead or alive? Why did you desert us? The day you left for the army, it was raining just like today and I didn't stand in your way, but looked out the window after you'd gone and struggled for something to say. Where will I find comfort? Only God knows. The love that glowed in your eyes used to light my way, now there is no light. I feel like I'm a leaf upon the wind with no place to land."

She heard a knock of the door. Carefully she placed her swaddled bundle on the mat and patted him gently so he wouldn't wake up. He slept so little. His illness was wearing him out. Slowly she dragged herself to the door and looked out a small window built within it. She saw the worried face of her neighbour Reema. Quickly she unbolted the lock.

The two women embraced each other. Invitingly, Maysoon said, "Welcome, welcome Reema. Come in from the cold." Her friend entered. "Here, sit down by the baby, but be careful not to disturb him. He's had another bad night."

Her friend, an older woman, sat down. Isn't he any better? you look like you've had a bad night. Go and wash, comb your hair. I'll watch him for you. Do you need anything?"

"Yes, I need some life for my son. There's been little improvement in his health. I think I'm going to loose him too! How can I wash or comb my hair at a time like this?"

What am I going to do Reema? I have no one but you. My parents are dead, my husband's missing in action and now Warbaby's dying too. If this infant dies, then what is there left for me to live for? I've sold most of my wedding gold to let us survive. There is no hope left!" She collapsed beside her friend, her face contorted in deep lines of fret.

Reema grabbed Maysoon's hand, squeezed it for comfort and said, "Take it easy. Have faith and pray to God to save the life of your little son and return your husband to you. Look on the bright side. You're young, you have your life ahead of you. There must be no more such talk of death and dying!"

But Maysoon barely heard her friend and asked, "Why? Why is the world punishing us? What did poor women like us do? Reema, you've lost three children from the war plus your husband. How can you be so brave? Why doesn't the U.N. lift the sanctions? Medicine would save the baby's life!"

She searched for an answer in the sad eyes of her friend. Then her companion said, "Ah, my child. War teaches the coward bravery. As for now, it seems the world has forgotten us. Every country in the American-led coalition was so quick to attack but since they destroyed us and left us without any means of existence, they are deaf to our pleas for mercy. There is no justice in this life. What can we do but bear our burdens and go on with our lives? There is no escape from our fate but through dreams or death."

Maysoon complained, "I'm twenty years old and I've seen in my short life more pain than most people see their entire lives. I have no money to support us, no education and no hope. Why did Khaled have to leave me? And what can I do about Warbaby? Why must he die too?"

She buried her face in her hands and began to sob. Crying was nothing new to her. She did it most of the day. Her whole body shook. Reema hugged her and tried to ease her pain. After a while, when Maysoon was calmer, her friend returned to her own dark house. Maysoon still sits and waits for her husband to return home, but in her heart, she knows the truth. She knows he's buried somewhere in the Kuwaiti desert, plowed under by the American-led forces during the Gulf war. He hardly had the chance to know his bride of a few months before he left for duty, he would never see his son and he lies almost forgotten but for the million tears Maysoon will yet shed for him. And as she looks at the starving figures of Warbaby, Maysoon thinks of all the other more fortunate children in the world. Where were those cards that were supposed to save lives of babies such as this? And where was the compassion of the civilised world?

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

Thursday, Dec. 26

1827 — Turkey's Sultan Muhamud II rejects right of allies to mediate in war with Greece.

1901 — Completion of Uganda Railway from Mombassa to Lake Victoria.

1938 — Declaration of Peru against all foreign intervention is approved by Pan American Conference.

1941 — U.S. declares Manila an open city in the Philippines in World War II.

1961 — United Nations officials charge the Northern Rhodesia was aiding secessionist Congo province of Katanga in its fight against U.S. forces.

1962 — Eight refugees from deep inside east Germany escape to West Berlin by crashing bus through barriers at border checkpoint.

1971 — Sixteen U.S. veterans of Vietnam War seize Statue of Liberty in New York Harbour to dramatise their anti-war stand.

1977 — Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egypt's President Anwar Sadat conclude meeting at Ismailia, Egypt, without agreeing on Middle East issues.

1989 — Forces loyal to Communist government begin surrendering as videotape aired on Romanian television shows bloody bodies of executed leader Nicolae Ceausescu and wife Elena.

1990 — King Michael returns to Romania after 43 years in exile, only to be deported again within 12 hours of his arrival.

Friday, Dec. 27

1927 — Joseph Stalin's faction wins at all-union congress in Soviet Union, and Leon Trotsky is expelled from Communist Party.

1944 — In World War II, Soviet forces surround Budapest; U.S. forces smash across German bulge in Belgium and relieve U.S. troops under siege at Bastogne.

1945 — Foreign ministers of Britain, United States and Soviet Union, meeting in Moscow, call for provisional democratic government in Korea.

1948 — Cardinal Mindszenty is arrested in Hungary.

1949 — The Netherlands

Queen Juliana signs document granting Indonesia sovereignty after more than three centuries of Dutch rule.

1956 — United Nations fleet begins clearing Suez Canal after Suez War.

1964 — Congo government charges that officers from Algeria and United Arab Republic are leading Congolese rebels on Congo's north eastern border.

1969 — Libya, Sudan and United Arab Republic announce political, economic and military agreement in Tripoli.

1972 — Australia halts military aid to South Vietnam, ending its involvement in Vietnam War.

1975 — China releases Soviet helicopter that flew into Chinese territory.

1976 — At least 20 people die in fight between two groups of blacks in Cape Town, South Africa.

1987 — Feroocious gun battle erupts in crowded market in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, after suspected Tamil rebels fatally shoot policeman, and at least 25 people are reported killed.

1989 — U.S. soldiers blast rock music and news bulletins about Panama at Vatican embassy in Panama City in attempt to drive General Manuel Noriega from refuge there.

1990 — After being recalled days earlier, Iraq's ambassadors return to their posts calling for "serious and constructive dialogue" on Gulf crisis.

Saturday, Dec. 28

1917 — Bessarabia proclaims independence as Moldavian Republic.

1938 — Iraq severs relations with France.

1942 — Japanese planes bomb Calcutta, India, in World War II.

1948 — Premier Nokrashy Pasha of Egypt is assassinated.

1950 — Chinese forces cross 38th parallel in Korea.

1962 — United Nations troops engage in heavy fighting in Katanga.

1966 — China detonates its fifth Atomic bomb

1968 — Israeli commandos raid Beirut Airport, destroying 13 aircraft.

1970 — Military court in Spain sentences six Basque separatists to death.

1974 — Guerrillas in Man-

agua, Nicaragua, invade Christmas party for U.S. ambassador, kill three guards and take several prominent Nicaraguans hostage.

1975 — Efforts are made to rescue 372 men trapped by coal mine explosion in north-eastern India. All 372 were killed.

1984 — Cambodian guerrillas counter-attack for fourth straight day despite withering artillery fire from Vietnamese occupying refugee camp along Thai-Cambodian border.

1986 — Excursion train lets off its 180 passengers in Tokyo, then plunges off a bridge, killing six people, most of them in a factory below.

1987 — Dozens of Palestinian teens appear before military courts in occupied West Bank charged with protests in West Bank and Gaza Strip.

1989 — Earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale kills at least 11 people in south eastern Australia.

1990 — Indian government opens talks with Sikh leaders on ending 7-year-old secessionist struggle in Punjab.

Sunday, Dec. 29

1921 — United States, France, Britain, Italy and Japan sign Washington treaty to limit naval armaments.

1933 — Premier Ion Duca of Romania is slain by iron guard, and George Tarescu succeeds him.

1934 — Japan renounces Washington naval treaty limiting naval armaments.

1940 — German bombers, during World War II, inflict greatest damage of London, England, since great fire of 1666.

1962 — United Nations troops occupy Elizabethville, Katanga.

1965 — Independence for Bechuanaland is announced.

1973 — Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos ends his elected term and begins to rule on basis of a takeover decree.

1987 — Gulf Cooperation Council calls for international naval force to protect Gulf shipping against Iranian attacks.

1988 — Sudan rolls back huge price increases in face of general protest strike that cripple major cities in that nation.

1989 — Polish parliament approves reforms that allow formation of political parties, protect private property and deny Communist Party guaranteed monopoly on power.

1989 — Czechoslovakian parliament elects dissident playwright Vaclav Havel as its president without opposition.

1990 — Johan Kraag sworn in as president of Suriname after bloodless military coup on Christmas Eve ousts former president.

Monday, Dec. 30

1777 — Bavaria, on death of Maximilian III, passes to Charles Theodore, elector Palatine.

1803 — Sindhia of Gwalior submits to British in India.

1880 — Transvaal Boers under Stephanus Kruger declare a republic.

1886 — German-Portuguese agreement on boundaries between Angola and German South-West Africa.

1903 — More than 500 people perish in Iriquois Theatre fire in Chicago, Illinois (U.S.).

1911 — Revolutionary provisional assembly in China elects Dr. Sun Yat Sen as nation's first president.

1947 — Romania's King Michael abdicates under Communist pressure.

1949 — France transfers sovereignty to Vietnam.

1953 — French West African states decide to form federation within French community.

1962 — China warns that ceasefire in that nation's border conflict with India is unstable.

1964 — U.N. Security Council resolves to call for end to all foreign intervention in the Congo, a ceasefire there, and withdrawal of mercenaries.

1987 — Iraq says its warplanes attacked ship in Gulf off Iran as toll grows in worst month of the "tanker war."

1988 — Yugoslavia's Premier Branko Mikulic and entire cabinet resign following mounting criticism of government's handling of nation's economic crisis.

1989 — Polish parliament approves reforms that allow formation of political parties, protect private property and deny Communist Party guaranteed monopoly on power.

1990 — Albanian Jews are allowed to begin emigrating to Israel for first time.

By The Associated Press

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Dec. 26

8:30 The Simpsons

Bart Simpson tries to imitate some of the stunts he sees on television. His father warns him against doing them.

9:10 NBA Basketball

10:00 News in English

10:20 Movie Of The Week

Light Of Day

Starring: Michael Fox

Patty and John, brother and sister, are fond of rock n'roll dance. They get so carried away that, Patty clashes with her mother.

Friday, Dec. 27

8:30 Coach

Coach is annoyed when he knows that his friend, Christine, earns more money than he does, he believes that a man should earn more.

9:10 Shakespeare

Miss Lee, a television host, is found murdered in her hotel room after covering the baseball game, Jessica investigates.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Simon And Simon

A gambler disappears. His young daughter asks the Simon brothers to find him in time for Christmas.

Saturday, Dec. 28

8:30 America's Funniest

Home Videos

9:00 Encounter

9:30 Life On The Land

A visit to the Island of Corfu and the sea around it.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Red King, White Knight

The film is about the conservative wing of the KGB and its opposition to perestroika and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, because they think it will undermine USSR's Socialist system.

Sunday, Dec. 29

8:30 Empty Nest

Carol does not approve of Jackie, her father's friend, and Jackie insists that she just wants to be the doctor's friend.

9:10 Murder She Wrote

Miss Lee, a television host, is found murdered in her hotel room after covering the baseball game, Jessica investigates.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Law And Order

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Captain Courageous

Starring: Spencer Tracy

Simon's friend, Nidge, buys a camera and decides to become a photo-journalist, while Deborah tries to get rid of her father's old shirts.

9:10 Nippon

The Learning Machine

An outstanding system of secondary education and the discipline of family life have resulted in a work ethos found in no other country in the world. But the education system has pressures that not everyone can handle.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Gabriel's Fire

First Date

Josephine, resorts to her womanly instincts to push Gabriel to see her more than a loving friend.

Tuesday, Dec. 31

8:30 Evening Shade
Emmy becomes upset when she learns that she is pregnant because she is about to run in the local elections.

9:10 Derrick

The circle closes on a retired electronics engineer, caught up in a game of industrial espionage.

10:00 News in English

10:20 Feature Film

Captain Courageous

Starring: Spencer Tracy

The arrogant son of a well-known businessman causes a lot of problems for his teachers and the people around him.

12:00 Belinda Carlisle

Runaway Horses Concert

A concert by the well-known singer Belinda Carlisle in which she sings hit songs from her album, The Runaway.

Wednesday, Jan. 1, 1992

8:30 Land Of Hope And Gloria

Beaumont House

Beaumont House is a typical British mansion open to visitors. It has a new director — an American black woman.

9:10 Climate And Man

A scientific documentary on climate changes around the Earth — tornadoes, deserts and desertification.

10:00 News in English

10:20 A Man For All Seasons

King Henry VIII wants a male heir to the throne of England. Queen Catherine fails to give a son therefore the King decides to divorce her but he needs the approval of the Pope in Rome. A conflict arises between the King and the church.

ANDY GAPP



Handwritten signature and date: 12/25/91

Putting the master to test

Rembrandt — The Master — And His Apprentices, now in Berlin

By Peter Hans Göpfert

BERLIN — It all started in 1967, when five leading art historians in Amsterdam launched the Rembrandt Research Project. This project has since proved to be a turning point in the study of this celebrated 17th century master. It has also sent shivers down the spines of many directors of the world's leading museums.

Armed with such advanced techniques as X-ray diagnostics, infrared, reflectometry, and neutron radiography, and combining them with their considerable expertise, they went off and gave the world's "Rembrandts," in particular those with questionable authenticity, a closer look.

At the turn of this century, the scholarly consensus attributed about one thousand paintings to Rembrandt. By the time the Rembrandt Research Project will have concluded its work, this figure will presumably have dwindled to about 250 authentic works.

Even now, the "challenge round" continues to proceed, its pace undiminished. The genius of Rembrandt itself, of course, remains uncontested. Thus, the director of the Berlin Gemäldegalerie

used the term "genius" with all due emphasis to describe the achievements of Rembrandt.

A huge exhibition now presents Rembrandt in light of this new knowledge. The aim is not to minimise his achievement but to recalibrate his stature among his contemporaries — who no longer need to stand in the shadow of this 17th century giant, a man who succeeding generations had endowed with super-human qualities.

The exhibition actually embraces several sub-exhibitions. First, there's one which has 46 authentic paintings by Rembrandt, an "untouchable," core Rembrandt. Then, there's a section with 12 paintings which, until recently, had been attributed to Rembrandt, but which have since been identified as the works of Rembrandt contemporaries, apprentices, or colleagues. They provide perspective and help outline the scientific reasoning behind these new attributions and the techniques and criteria applied.

Yet another exhibition presents a number of paintings where the identity of the artists is unchallenged, where the works belong either to workers in the Rembrandt workshop or to frequenters

of the Rembrandt circle.

Among them are Jan Lievens, who probably shared the workshop with Rembrandt in Leyden, and Pieter Lastman, who learned his skills in the Rembrandt workshop. Also shown are works of Gerrit Dou and Govert Flinck, works which were considered to be "genuine" Rembrandts already during his lifetime (and were sold as such). Also shown: A Berlin half-length once considered to be a self-portrait by Rembrandt and which today is attributed to Flinck.

A companion exhibition presents sketches by Rembrandt. Here, too, the exhibition provides a juxtapositioning of works once considered to be Rembrandts (and today known to have other authors) with authentic Rembrandts.

Then, a collection of forty etchings by Rembrandt, which he pursued as a distinct skill as well as an experimental medium.

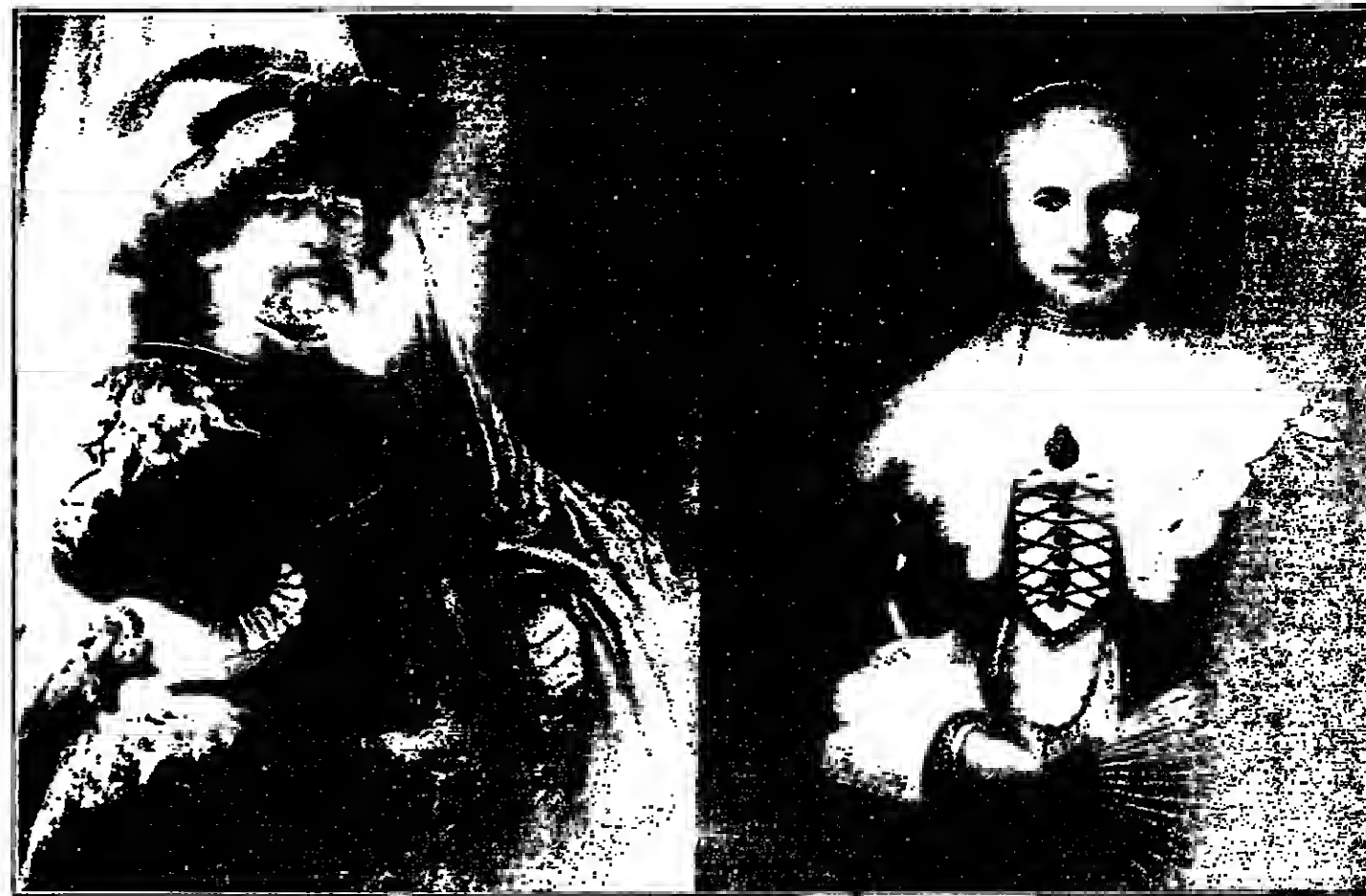
Finally, in the Alte Museum, a special exhibition of the "Man With the Golden Helm," which suffered a classic case of "aura loss" six years ago when it was shown that Rembrandt was not its creator. Scholars have yet to determine its real creator. It

serves as a model for how scientists went about verifying their doubts. It's now up to the public to decide whether, now that the name "Rembrandt" has vanished, it still loves this picture — once considered as impressive a piece of art in Berlin as the bust of Nefertete.

The goal of the exhibition organisers is ambitious indeed: Their didactic approach and educative aim — that every observer be able to appreciate the scientific and scholarly reasoning behind the attributions to either Rembrandt or the "workshop."

It remains a moot point whether this will produce hundreds of thousands of Rembrandt specialists. The necessary glass encasement of many of the paintings isn't exactly conducive to detecting crevices, fissures, elevations, and other fine points of canvas painting.

Add to that the thronging crowds, and the visitor can count himself or herself lucky just to find sufficient peace to appreciate the profoundness of such pictures such as "Abraham's Sacrifice" (a loan from St. Petersburg) or to permit the astonishing fragment of a picture that would later become The Anatomy of Dr. Deyman to seep into



Rembrandt in the light of science: The Berlin exhibitions present a panoply of genuine works of the master and creations of his apprentices and workshop colleagues, plus etchings by Rembrandt.

Shown here, two works at the Berlin exhibition. One on the left is *The Ransomed Slave* (1626), on loan from a private collection in Paris; the other (on the right), *The Picture of Agatha* (1641), is from Buckingham Palace in London.

the mind, a picture of a brain section which suggests existential dimensions.

In other creations, there is more tranquility, a calmness arising from within and reflecting a spiritual and psychic tension among the portrayed figures, the working of Rembrandt's light and shining, his darkness and his

brightness.

Three museums with large Rembrandt collections, the Rijksmuseum of Amsterdam, the National Gallery in London, and the Berlin museums under the aegis of the foundation Preussischer Kulturbesitz collaborated to make the complex exhibition possible.

There's a touch of irony in

the need to remind readers that the exhibition organisers in Berlin are the Staatliche Museen with their Gemäldegalerie and the etching collection (Kupferstich-Kabinett), and are not to be confused with a certain sponsor.

The manner in which the sponsor has exploited this exhibition for a distinct adver-

tisement campaign is unprecedented for German conditions and liable to provoke irritation. How ironic that Rembrandt, a man chronically in financial straits, should now be in the custodial hands of a credit-card venture: A reviewer of cultural affairs is sorely tempted to comment at length — IN Press.

Plan to send treasures abroad angers Italy's arts establishment

By John Follain

Reuter

ROME — A government plan to lend art treasures to foreign countries has infuriated Italian museum heads and art historians who say it amounts to selling the family silver.

The draft law would allow foreign museums and cultural institutes to borrow archaeological finds for up to 10 years — to exhibit, restore or just study them.

The backers of the idea,

brainchild of Junior Arts Minister Luigi Covatta, said this would help combat the merciless plundering of Italy's rich cultural heritage by thieves.

Police report some 240,000 art treasures — from Roman coins to marble columns — have been stolen in Italy since 1969. Their total value runs into tens of millions of dollars.

"If we satisfy the demand for such works on the world market, foreign museums won't need to supply them-

selves with Italian masterpieces through illegal trafficking," said Mr. Covatta, a Socialist senator, when he presented his proposal late last month.

But museum directors, art historians and conservation lobbies called it a crackpot idea.

Leading art historian Giulio Carlo Argan, a former Communist mayor of Rome, said it was akin "to selling the family silver."

More than 200 historians and restoration experts have

signed an open letter to Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti urging him to ditch the proposal before it is even discussed in cabinet.

They argued the plan would have little effect on the thieves who pilfer ill-protected archaeological sites, as most of their loot is snapped up by private collectors.

The head of the Uffizi Gallery in Florence told Mr. Covatta his plan was a throwback to the heavy-handed rule of fascist dictator Benito Mussolini.

Mussolini decreed private art collections were the property of the state and sold many off. He broke up state-owned collections to furnish embassies and ministries or to make presents to the likes of Adolf Hitler.

"Art works were stripped from their historic context without any awareness of their value and history. They are works we can't get back because they've been destroyed or put in deposits," said Uffizi Director Anna Maria Petrioli Tofani.

Comparison with the strutting dictator angers Mr. Covatta, who calls his opponents cultural chauvinists.

The draft law would only apply to art treasures stored far from the tourist's eye for security reasons or because there is no room to display them.

Backers say the plan would help meet a deluge of requests from foreign museums for art works kept in Italy.

Arts Ministry Director-General Francesco Sissini, whose opposition has split

the department down the middle, does not accept Italy owns the world anything.

"Our country is already in credit with the rest of the world which, over the years, has robbed us of masterpieces and monuments."

"That's why we must give priority to a policy which studies and benefits from the art works — where they are," Mr. Sissini said in an unusual public clash with Mr. Covatta at a news conference last month.

Mr. Sissini said art author-

ities needed government help in organising the huge quantities of art works stored in deposits. "There are 3,000 museums in Italy, 710 of them state-owned — we need time and money."

The draft law presented by Mr. Covatta is already a minor victory for the arts establishment. The plan has been watered down so that only ancient treasures could be loaned while art works from later periods stay at home.

France pays homage to most far-sighted of her donors

By Pascale Teinac

PARIS — "From Corot to the Impressionists" would be quite a commonplace title for an exhibition if it were not subtitled "The Moreau-Nélaton Donation," which gives it the value of paying homage to a man whom very few people have heard of and yet one who, in his time, revolutionised the august Louvre Museum. It was indeed Etienne Moreau-Nélaton who quite simply, but almost by force, had the Impressionists exhibited in the Louvre.

On July 26, 1906, Mr. Moreau-Nélaton offered the Louvre a magnificent collection of 19th century paintings and drawings which he had built up over the years with far-sightedness and passion. The collection included 39 Corots, 14 Delacroix and all the great names in French Romantic painting, but also the painters known as the Impressionists, who were still often derided, and their great precursor, Manet. But Moreau-Nélaton's donation to the museum was matched with exacting conditions: The Louvre would have to exhibit all the works offered "without any additions or withdrawals." It took the generous donor a year and a half of

negotiations with the state to have his donation accepted as it was.

This is how, in 1907, after a first exhibition of the donation at the Museum of Decorative Arts, the following paintings appeared on the walls of the Louvre: Edouard Manet's *Déjeuner Sur l'Herbe*, which had created a scandal at the Salon des Refusés in 1863, Claude Monet's *Coquelicots*, which marked one of the great turning points in Impressionism, Alfred Sisley's *Passerelle à Argenteuil*, Camille Pissarro's *Pontoise*, Johann-Berthold Jongkind's *Ruines du Château de Rossmont*, and Chasse au Papillons by Berthe Morisot, a discreet artist considered worthy of being presented in the Louvre.

The donor's secret

Never before, until this memorable donation, had a living artist had his work exhibited in the Louvre (this was now the case with Manet). And the rare Impressionists who had had the honour of being shown in a museum had never been further than the Luxembourg Museum, where Manet's *Olympia* had also ended up.

The latter had been bought by public fund-raising organised by Monet and to which Moreau-Nélaton had contributed.

Two further donations to the Louvre, in 1907 and 1919, and a final bequest on his death in 1927, were to make Etienne Moreau-Nélaton the most generous donor to French museums, together with Dr. La Caze, who had made a sumptuous bequest in 1865. In all, this man, to whom France is today paying homage, offered the Louvre 125 paintings, 6,000 drawings and numerous handwritten documents, as well as leaving the Bibliothèque Nationale library 3,000 prints and a host of documents on 19th century art.

With him, the whole history of three generations of art collectors came to an end.

The collection was started by Adolphe Moreau senior (1800-1859): an exchange dealer fascinated by paintings and a friend of Delacroix and other contemporary painters whose works he had bought. On his death, he left his son, also called Adolphe (1827-1882) some 800 paintings, pastels and drawings. Adol-

phe and his wife, Camille Nélaton, a well-known ceramist, had continued the collection, selling and buying paintings, art objects and furniture. Their son Etienne (1859-1929), who became a painter himself, inherited the family tradition.

His life was marked by a drama: His wife Edmée Braun, married in 1889, and his mother Camille, who had so greatly encouraged his vocation as a painter, died in the fire in the Bazar de la Charité store and he found himself alone with three young children. Strangely enough, this misfortune was to push him into the activity of a passionate collector.

Three weeks later, he bought Manet's *Berthe Morisot* with a Fan and a Corot. In the space of a few years, he created a magnificent collection of Corots and systematically bought Impressionist paintings which he was very keen on.

Yet a mystery remains: In Etienne Moreau-Nélaton's collection, there was not a single Renoir, not a single Degas and not a single Cézanne — L'Actualité en France.

By Kathy Chenault
The Associated Press

PEKING — Craftsmen at the Peking Folk Musical Instruments Factory lovingly shape fine wood and snakeskin into traditional stringed instruments and drums.

But what keeps the factory going are electric guitars and modern metal drum sets.

"In the past few years the factory could hardly survive with just the production of traditional instruments," said Factory Manager Feng Yuankai, who refused to give sales figures.

Not just in music but across the art scene, traditional forms are losing ground to modern, Western art forms. Pop songs, videotape adventure movies, televised soap operas and oil paintings are drawing interest away from folk tunes, historical costume, dramas and pen-and-ink drawings of mountains wreathed in fog.

Officials now say it is important to revitalise traditional arts to preserve Chinese culture. But past official policies are blamed for contributing to the shift away from traditional arts, particularly the Mao-inspired turmoil of the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

Even China's signature art form — the Peking Opera — is struggling to survive.

Most young people prefer a night at the disco to an evening at the Peking Opera because of the opera's slow pace and archaic language that can be hard to understand.

And it's not just young people who lack appreciation

Traditional Chinese arts threatened

for Peking opera, which often strikes foreigners as a cacophony of shrill warbling accompanied by exaggerated movements and the crashing of cymbals and gongs.

"I don't like it. It's too old-fashioned," said Liu Dong, a 58-year-old Peking resident who was standing near a theatre, where star performer Yang Jianzhong would take the stage in a few hours.

Top Communist Party officials marked the 200th anniversary of Peking Opera last year with dire warnings about its decline. Li Ruihuan, the party's top arts official, said Peking Opera audiences are dwindling and troupes can't keep their performers because of meager income.

Lin Ruikang, an official in the Culture Ministry's Drama Department, links the hard times facing traditional Chinese arts to the Cultural Revolution.

During the chaotic decade of ultra-leftist repression, Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Tse-tung exhorted young "red guard" zealots to destroy traditional habits, ideas, customs and culture.

They demolished temples and churches, burned books, seized government minis-

tries, ransacked homes and persecuted intellectuals.

Traditional arts were reviled as trappings of China's feudal past and only government-approved revolutionary operas could be performed.

Traditional singers, actors and craftsmen were sent to work on farms and for 10 years no successors were trained.

The Cultural Revolution ended following Mao's death in 1976, but it left deep scars on Chinese society and culture.

Then in the late 1970s, China began opening to the outside world and a population starved for entertainment was deluged with foreign art forms, Ms. Lin said.

"So the young people now know more about Karaoke and break-dancing," she said. Karaoke bars, which first opened in Japan, allow customers to take the stage and sing pop music along with pre-recorded videos.

Even people who work in the traditional arts now find it difficult to develop appreciation for Chinese culture among their children.

Sun Qingtang, a 54-year-old craftsman at the instruments factory, is one of only three people in China who can make the "Gu Qin," a

stringed instrument with a 3,000-year history. He said he wanted his son to take up the same vocation.

"But he wanted to be a businessman and make more money," Mr. Sun said.

In the old days, there was no problem handing down the traditional arts because children naturally did what their parents did. Mr. Yang, the 51-year-old Peking Opera star, said both his parents were Peking Opera performers. He first performed at age 3.

"I have worried that Peking Opera would die off, but the Chinese people cannot let that happen," he said. "In foreign countries they have famous ballet and famous orchestras. But here we have Peking Opera."

To draw in audiences, some troupes are changing the dialogue to make it more understandable and experimenting with electrical instruments to enliven the music. In some places, special performances are given for college students to try to develop a following.

Ms. Lin said she is confident that China's traditional arts eventually will regain their popularity.

"When people get old they want something with slow rhythm," she said. "Once people become more mature they appreciate Peking Opera."

She insisted the government doesn't want to suppress Western entertainment in China.

Mr. Yang said, "we can also have broad interests to enrich our art. I myself like Charlie Chaplin films very much."

German health care system born out of political needs

By Steve James
Reuters

BONN — Bismarck devised it as a way to quell worker unrest. Hitler used it to build an Aryan master race.

Now Germany's century-old National Health System is catching the eye of American politicians seeking an issue in next year's U.S. presidential campaign.

While none of Germany's political parties denies the success of the cradle-to-grave system, one aspect — what to do about long-term nursing care — never fails to generate heated debate here.

The system guarantees all

Germans comprehensive benefits and a free choice of doctor, regardless of ability to pay.

"Germany's social insurance plan has successfully achieved its overriding objective to provide all citizens with ready access to medical care at a cost the country considers socially acceptable," said a report this year in one of America's top medical magazines, the New England Journal of Medicine.

With President George Bush and his prospective Democratic challengers reported to be homing in on national health care as an

election issue in the face of spiralling health costs, eyes are turning towards the German system as a possible model.

The New England Journal's John Iglehart said the system is attractive to Americans, who tend to eschew anything that smacks of government control, because it allows freedom of choice in a free market environment.

"To the United States, which values collaboration between the private and public sectors and favours a limited role for government, Germany's century-old experience is an impressive demonstration of the accommodation of private interests

to the broader public good to achieve what is in the United States an elusive but oft-stated goal," wrote Mr. Iglehart.

In other words, the German system works — with 88 per cent of the people receiving health care. The other 12 per cent buy private insurance.

The system is administered by sickness funds that pay doctors and hospitals out of contributions from workers and employers. The combined contribution currently averages 12.8 per cent of gross salary.

In order to receive payment, Germany's 73,000 doctors must be members of

Regional Associations of Physicians, which negotiate with the sickness funds to set fees.

Benefits are the same for all sick workers and their dependents. Federal law stipulates that unemployed sick people and their dependents also receive benefits.

In 1989, in the former West Germany, hospitalisation accounted for 31.5 per cent of total medical expenditures of the sickness funds. After that, visits to the doctor claimed 17.5 per cent and purchase of prescribed drugs 15.6 per cent.

Other benefits include: Purchase of medical appliances, dental care, preven-

tive measures, maternity benefits and funeral benefits.

The system will even pay for visits to spas, if a doctor believes it will improve a patient's health.

Patients present the doctor with a voucher from their sickness fund on which the doctor notes the treatment and drugs prescribed. The patient never sees a bill and no money passes hands between patient and doctor.

The doctors send their Regional Association a list of all treatments given, and are paid every quarter from the sickness fund, based on pre-agreed rates.

National Health has a uni-

que place in German history.

Count Otto Bismarck, the Prussian statesman who united the feuding German principalities into a single state in 1871, envisioned health insurance to promote political stability.

His proposals aimed to quell unrest among workers flocking to German cities during the industrial revolution and curb the growing influence of the unions.

He enacted laws establishing several types of social insurance — for accident, disability, sickness, old age and unemployment. These form the basis of today's system.

During the Hitler years, the Nazis attempted to use

the system for political ends to build a pure German society.

As Nazi Labour Minister Franz Seldte put it, "The whole social security system serves only one aim today. The healthy, enthusiastic, productive, militarily fit, racially valuable German man of the future."

After the war, West Germany rebuilt the system with a new constitutional structure guaranteeing basic freedoms. In Communist east Germany, a heavily-subsidised system emerged of large public hospitals and clinics. Today, many of them lag behind western technology.

AIDS epidemic grows worldwide; one face stands out

By Daniel Q. Haney
The Associated Press

BOSTON — The AIDS epidemic caused more human tragedies in 1991, with no scientific breakthroughs that could prevent the lethal disease.

Worldwide, an estimated 8 million people carry HIV, the AIDS virus, and that number will grow to 40 million by the year 2000, researchers say. Three-quarters of them catch it through sex between men and women.

At least 6 million Africans

are already infected, or one of 40 adults, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Some 750,000 children have been infected with the AIDS virus after receiving it from their mothers.

Major AIDS research is being conducted in several African countries, including Zaire, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Senegal and Uganda. At least one vaccine has been tested in Zaire.

Africa is considered a good testing ground for vaccines because the spread of the disease is slowing in the developed world, making it dif-

ficult to get large enough groups to conduct studies.

Still, about 200,000 Americans have gotten AIDS since the epidemic began. And for many in 1991, the face of this disease became one they recognised beyond all others.

Magic Johnson, one of the world's best-known athletes, disclosed he was quitting professional basketball because he was infected with HIV.

Suddenly the life of this epidemic, focused on just one man who became enmeshed in it.

Johnson, who is still outwardly healthy, believes he

contracted the virus in a way that is still unusual in the United States: He caught it from a woman.

One decade into the epidemic, 91 per cent of the U.S. victims are drug abusers or men who had sex with other men. Only 3 per cent got AIDS heterosexually. And of these people, by far the common route of transmission is women getting infected through sex with drug-injecting them.

Yet Johnson's tragedy underscored the real possibility that HIV can spread through male-female sex.

Even though the risk is still slight for most heterosexual Americans, in some places in the United States this appears to be happening, quietly and often.

Especially disturbing to health officials is the growth of the infection among teenagers, especially the poor. One recent study found that over 1 per cent of adolescents in Washington, D.C., are now infected, many of them apparently heterosexually. Another found that nearly half of 1 per cent of older teenage girls enrolling in the job corps across the United

States carry the virus.

"The virus is winning," says Dr. James Curran, AIDS chief at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

Among other AIDS developments over the past year:

— According to the CDC, 44,672 AIDS cases were reported in the United States between November 1990 and October 1991, bringing the epidemic's total to 199,406. Of this, 2 per cent were under age 13, 11 per cent were female, 49 per cent lived in New York or California and

85 per cent lived in Metropolitan areas with over 500,000 people.

— The CDC proposed that HIV-infected doctors be barred from doing procedures that might expose patients to their blood, unless they get permission first from a review panel and tell patients about their infection. Many doctor groups oppose the guidelines and say the risk to patients is minuscule, even though a Florida dentist infected five patients during treatment.

— A new AIDS drug, called DDI or Videx, was approved. It becomes the

second medicine, after AZT that combats the AIDS virus.

Medicines were also approved to relieve the anemia caused by AZT and to treat an eye infection common among AIDS patients.

— The pharmaceutical industry estimates that 8 AIDS medicines and vaccines are under development. A year ago, the total was 62.

— Nine potential AIDS vaccines have been tested on uninfected people. Major studies to see if they can prevent infection are expected to begin in two to three years.

New enigmas about AIDS virus clutter path of vaccine research

By Lee Yanowitch
Reuters

PARIS — As scientists edge closer to developing an effective weapon against AIDS, they are discovering that the disease is far more complex and enigmatic than they ever

imagined.

Scientists agree that several puzzles surrounding the AIDS virus — which infects 5,000 more people each day — remain to be solved before a vaccine can be produced.

One of the most stubborn obstacles is the unknown

number of strains of the HIV virus causing acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

New studies also show the virus is more widespread in the body than previously thought, and that a mysterious co-factor — possibly a

bacteria — provokes certain cells to attack the immune systems of AIDS victims.

Marc Girard, director of applied research at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, said scientists working on a vaccine have constructed "tens, even hundreds" of theoretic-

al genetic sequences for potential strains of HIV, but do not know yet whether they actually correspond to living viruses.

Only a vaccine which stimulates antibodies against all strains of the virus could be relied on to protect against AIDS.

"If we find there are as many strains of the virus as we have genetic sequences, we won't be able to produce a vaccine. We can't make a vaccine with 250 strains," Dr. Girard told Reuters. "But we could make one with five, or seven, or 10."

Dr. Girard said a World Health Organisation (WHO) study to identify the various strains is expected to be completed in 1993 and will make the researchers' task easier.

"In about 18 months, we should know how many viruses are circulating. But we're still not about to make a vaccine because of the problem of variability," he said.

Luc Montagnier, first to identify the HIV virus, recently drew the public eye to yet another puzzling discovery. He said HIV was far more widespread in the body than previously thought.

"We have found that the virus is not only present in

the blood, but it is in the organs, the lymph nodes and the mucous membrane," Dr. Montagnier said on French television.

In an about-turn from early statements, Dr. Montagnier said it was indeed possible for AIDS to be transmitted by saliva and recommended oral contact be avoided with HIV-infected people.

Dr. Montagnier's research team has also identified new cells in patients with advanced AIDS which attack the infection-fighting white cells of the immune system.

He said these killer cells multiply and attack even if the AIDS virus is no longer present, indicating that a co-factor — bacteria or other viruses — works with HIV to bring on AIDS.

The Pasteur Institute and France's National Agency for AIDS Research (ANRS) are due to start testing a potential vaccine on humans next year.

The vaccine consists of two injections administered a few days apart, the first activating the immune system, the second activating the antibodies.

The 60 volunteers needed for the tests must be HIV-free and between 18 and 50 years old because immunological reactions break down in

later years.

These experiments will be used to show whether a vaccine that has been tested on chimpanzees can be tolerated by the human body, not to see if it protects against AIDS, Dr. Girard said.

Doctors conducting tests say volunteers run no risk of contamination because the two components of the vaccine — genetically engineered substances and the empty "envelope" of the HIV virus — do not contain any toxic matter.

"The biggest danger in all of this is that a volunteer could say 'ah I've been vaccinated, I'm protected, I can go for it,'" Dr. Girard said.

ANRS President Doctor Jean-Paul Levy said one of the vaccine's major drawbacks is that even if successfully tested, its effectiveness will only have been proven against AIDS caught from infected blood, not via sexual intercourse.

"What we don't know is whether the preparations we are testing also protect against a virus which enters the body through the mucous membrane," Dr. Levy told Reuters.

"If not, we'll have to develop another treatment to prevent the virus from cross-

ing the membrane. People don't usually catch AIDS through the bloodstream, but while making love. Either via the mucous membrane of the cervix or the rectum," he said.

But Dr. Girard insists a vaccine is the only realistic solution.

"Chemical therapy is out of the question because it's too expensive. Condoms also cost too much and go against the customs of most inhabitants of the Third World," he said.

"We can't ask them to have only one sexual partner because in much of Africa it is perfectly acceptable to have two or three mistresses. So what's left? Only the vaccine," he said.

Meanwhile, AIDS is raging through the developing world. Who predicts the number of fully developed AIDS cases in the world — now estimated at 1.5 million — will have multiplied 10 times by the year 2000.

"If everything worked well we could have a vaccine in 1997. But nothing goes in a straight line in life. That's why, even if I say the year 2000, I can only hope with all my heart, but we can't be sure," Dr. Girard said.

Indonesia finally realises it has AIDS

By Jonathan Thatcher
Reuters

JAKARTA — Iswati takes a mix of pills to keep AIDS at bay, though Lia says she heard horse meat works.

Both work in Jakarta red light areas, one for locals and one for foreigners, where the government has finally told Indonesians they can catch acquired deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

"Yes, I am afraid. I take a mix of pills and antibiotics so I don't catch it," says Iswati, a 26-year-old prostitute in the huge brothel complex of Kramat Tunggal near Jakarta's port.

Indonesia has, until now, officially tended to overlook its tens of thousands of prostitutes of both sexes and two million foreign tourists a year and regard AIDS as an essentially foreign problem.

But the government gave its people a jolt late last month, just before World AIDS Day, by announcing that three women in a red light area in Surabaya in East Java had the disease.

Before the announcement the average Indonesian, if he or she thought about it at all, appeared to consider AIDS as something impossible to catch from having sex with another Indonesian.

"The government was always secretive about it. They didn't check blood properly. They were worried about the tourists," said a local journalist.

"We should have been ready from the beginning to fight AIDS ... the government belittled AIDS because it considered we had good morals," Dede Oetomo, a university professor and head of Indonesia's only Gay and Lesbian Action Group.

A Health Ministry official said 13 people have died from the disease in Indonesia while another 36 have caught it.

"I think there are 10,000 AIDS carriers in Indonesia. That is a rough figure because in Thailand the number has reached 400,000, while Indonesian behaviour is just the same as Thai's," Prof. Oetomo told the weekly magazine Editor.

The government, now taking the threat more seriously, this month began handing out 500,000 condoms in Kramat Tunggal to encourage prostitutes to make their clients use them.

It is not clear it is having much effect.

"No, AIDS is no problem here," said a smiling barman, as he poured a glass of warm beer at one of the 220 houses that pack the muddy lanes of the eight-hectare (20-acre) brothel complex.

"Some do, some don't," shrugs when asked if his 1 women use condoms.

One of them, 24-year-old Sundari who charges 25,000 rupiah (\$12) for her services is less glib.

"I like people to use condom but some of them refuse. I have no choice but to accept it because I need the money to support my family," she says over a plate of chicken and rice in a corner by the private rooms.

Like most of the 2,000 women working in the brothel, almost a town, it comes from central Java where there are far more people than the land can support.

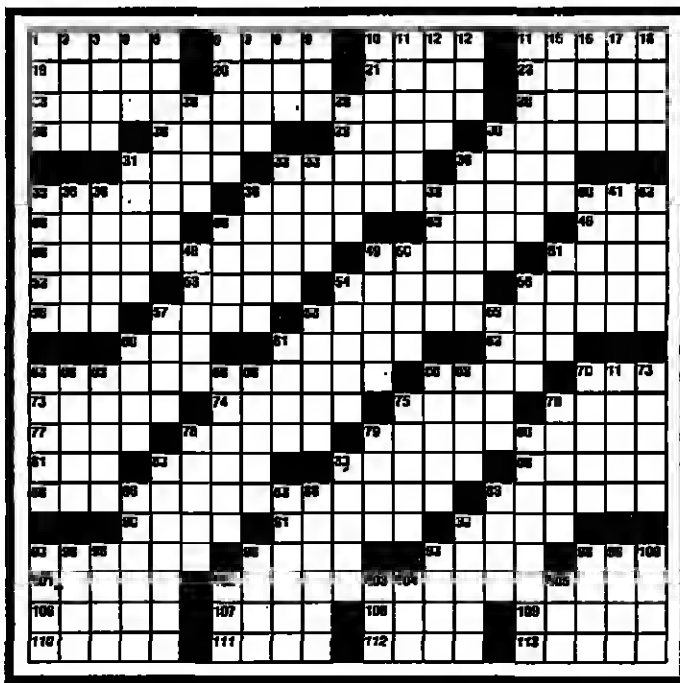
The government says it tested the women here for AIDS, but Ms. Sundari said no one has checked blood yet.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

THE DAYS GROW SHORT
By Charles R. Woodard

ACROSS
1 Tooth
8 May — Lincoln
10 Feline
11 Cordy's victim
12 "I am" —
13 You —
14 Skin cream
15 Ingredient
16 "Red River"
17 "The Godfather"
18 "The Godfather"
19 "The Godfather"
20 "The Godfather"
21 "The Godfather"
22 "The Godfather"
23 "The Godfather"
24 "The Godfather"
25 "The Godfather"
26 "The Godfather"
27 "The Godfather"
28 "The Godfather"
29 "The Godfather"
30 "The Godfather"

DOWN
1 Aisle of stage
2 Reptile
3 Ringer leader
4 "The Godfather"
5 "The Godfather"
6 "The Godfather"
7 "The Godfather"
8 "The Godfather"
9 "The Godfather"
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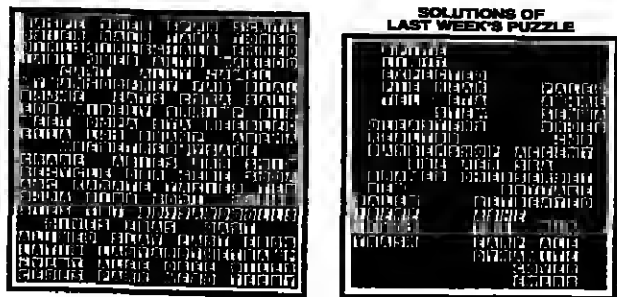


Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Be very careful with anyone who may solve a baffling cryptogram using a pen.
2. Baffling listened as girls fawn blew his own dubious alibi with one final foul gibe.
3. Fresh-laid eggs, placed by frog in shallow pond, hatch into baby pollywogs.
4. Leafless wintry trees aren't always lifeless.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. SNEEB UCWCTBYB STUCBCEY ENTO I
EYNSBB ONOT SAK KNOTBTEE YA I
WIOR.
2. TRFJ FBSBWB BSCJB ISCJN XJBQJFY
HLDYLT FSJJI XKJ OLS BJDY XSW.
3. BAMB, UG BAMB, BUGH EGH TUFEL CLF
CALF OAM TROUGH CAM UG TAM.
4. ZLWO YLWFT WTWZZQ UBLWBA
RHEWLWT AHFLAT RBLY AYUEQ FADOT.



ACROSS
1 Sore
2 Play a visit to
3 World cry
4 Long cut
5 "Pony and —"
6 Foot of a fabric
7 "I cannot tell —"
8 Swifly
9 Prudently term
10 Occupation
11 Quaker-like
12 Instrument
13 Sudden and
14 Ant
15 Beast of
16 "The —"
17 "The —"
18 "The —"
19 "The —"
20 "The —"
21 "The —"
22 "The —"
23 "The —"
24 "The —"
25 "The —"
26 "The —"
27 "The —"
28 "The —"
29 "The —"
30 "The —"

DOWN
1 Kind of orange
2 Unwieldy
3 Large four-footed
4 Animals
5 Closes
6 Very light wood
7 Post T.S.
8 Occasion
9 Looks for
10 Insect feeding on
11 Kind of bear
12 Sudden and
13 Ant
14 Beast of
15 "The —"
16 "The —"
17 "The —"
18 "The —"
19 "The —"
20 "The —"
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Arab rep

by The Associated Press

MUNIF DELRAHMAN Munif is one of the Arab world for writing about taboo subjects like corruption and human rights. For decades he has paid the price.

Saudi Arabia took away his passport, Iraqi authorities jailed him for months. Many Arab countries banned his novels, which were so sharp Mr. Munif sees as the sharp end of Arab nationalism, a lack of democracy and corruption.

All Arab countries, resemble each other in their prisons," the 57-year-old writer said in an interview at his home. "There are no simple differences in the number of prisoners and the number of prisons. There are just governments who believe in democracy."

Prisons, corruption and the infusion caused by trying to tempt to westerners, especially Americans, are the main themes of two Munif novels just published, one in Arabic, the other a English translation of an earlier work.

"This importance is that he AZT writes about sensitive topics," said Aziz Awit, a poet and literary critic for the newspaper *Sharq Al Awsat*. "He's well-known for his work."

The book in Arabic deals with mental torture, beatings and psychological humiliations, experienced by two men who are moved from prison to prison. For Mr. Munif's compositions, the various jails represent life in different Arab countries.

"There is no means to realise everyone's dream of enjoying basic rights in a democratic atmosphere because the systems in the region are either feudal or tribal or military," he told an interviewer.

The book in English translation titled *The Trench*, is the second part of a quintet written over the past decade. It chronicles the forgetting changes in a slow-paced desert society corrupted by wealth.

While the first volume revolved around an oil town, the second focuses on life in the capital, with the king increasingly beholden to the oil companies as the ruling monarchy acquires vast wealth.

Other volumes in the quintet follow the country through a major political crisis, when a king is deposed and internal problems erupt under the torrent of petroleum.

U.S. econo

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Saudi Arabia took away his passport, Iraqi authorities jailed him for months. Many Arab countries ban his novels, which are on what Mr. Munif sees as the most shared trait of Arab nations: a lack of democracy and human rights.

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Prisons, corruption and the human rights issues caused by trying to export westerners, especially Americans, are the main themes of two Munif novels just published here. In Arabic, the other English translation of an earlier work.

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U.S. econo

By Nidal M. Ibrahim
Special to the Jordan Times

BETHLEHEM. Occupied West Bank — The crescent of the moon hangs eerily over the Mosque of Omar. It is a cool night and the town square is empty — except for the Israeli soldiers; about five or six sit in their jeep parked under a tall tree against the Church of Nativity. On top of the New Tourist Shopping Centre, a permanent Israeli presence has been established. A machine gun-toting soldier, wrapped in a heavy coat with a cap and gloves, keeps a watchful eye over the square below next to a listless Israeli flag.

The night is quiet except for the occasional laughter of the soldiers.

A taxi pulls into the city square, bringing back residents working in Jerusalem and Israel proper; the passengers quickly disembark and disappear into the maze of alleys that meet into the parking lot.

The courtyard of the Church of Nativity is quiet. The outline of a star sitting on top of a cross can be made out. A little farther to the left, on top of the entrance to the church, another cross can be seen. But the church and its surroundings are uncharacteristically dark for this time of the year.

Christmas come, Bethlehem is usually a festival of lights and activity. But this year, as in the previous four, all celebrations will be subdued. The intifada, the Palestinian's struggle against the Israeli occupation, rages on.

"Since 1987, with the start of the intifada, the Municipal Council, has stopped decorating the city with lights, decorations and Christmas trees,"

said Hanna J. Nasser, deputy mayor of Bethlehem. "The city is a melting pot of Bethlehem, as in many other cities in the occupied Arab territories, suffer for having fathers, sons and daughters in jail or in hospitals. "It's not easy to have all these feelings and have decorations," Mr. Nasser said. "But this year, because of the peace initiative, we will make a few decorations, very few.

The grim atmosphere is characteristic to all aspects of life under occupation. Recession is deep, inflation soars, economy suffers. Although about 2,000 tourists visit the town everyday, sales are well below previous years. Merchants can be seen approaching tourists in the town square inviting them to visit their stores.

As buses pour into the city square and tourists disembar, stragglers sitting on the sides instantly spring to attention, approaching, even accosting, the visitors with their wares. "Twenty shekels," a chain smoking, unshaven man in his mid-40s says as he walks along with a tourist. "Okay, give me 10. Look its good quality. Give me eight shekels."

A gray haired 60-year-old man, shoeshine box in hand, approaches the tourists. In broken English, he tries to find a customer as the visitors ignore him and follow their guide into the church.

Standing on the edge of the church's courtyard, watching all this activity, is Mike Rock. Huddled in his long beige overcoat, he keeps a sharp eye for any unfamiliar faces that are not in a group of tourists. A tour guide, Mr. Rock has found it hard to make a living competing against Israeli tour guides that come with ever-

bus. "I stay here all day looking for people to guide," he says. "Sometimes, I stay here one week and I have no one to guide."

"(The tourists) think we're going to rob them," he continues. "They're afraid of us. They (Israeli officials) tell them at the airport 'don't go to

the West Bank and stay away from Arabs."

Although able to speak Arabic, French, English, Spanish and German, it is hard to find employment, Mr. Rock said. He has tried to get a job with one of the agencies in Jerusalem where most of the tours

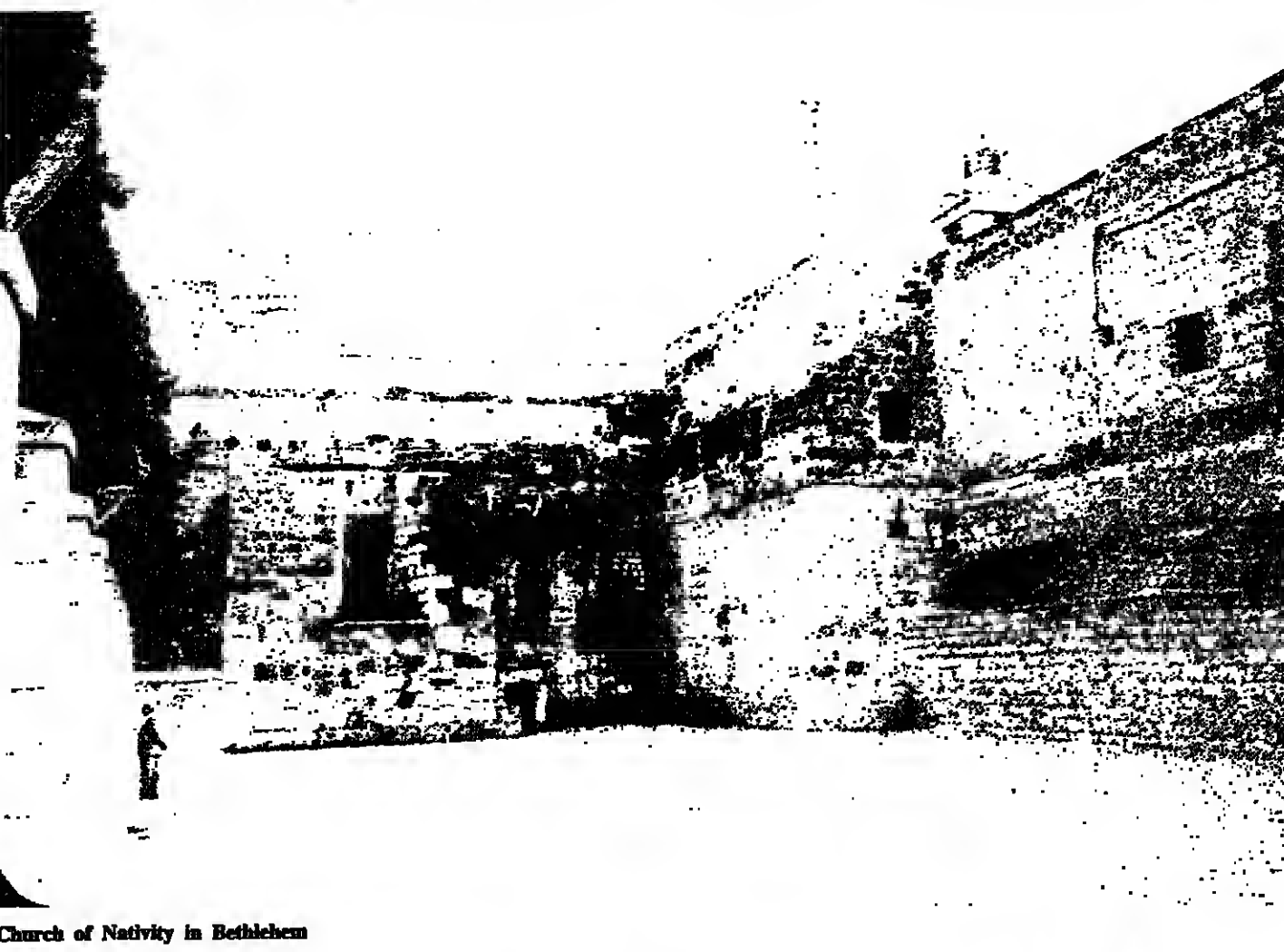
are organised.

"They say all right and take my name and number to communicate with me and nothing happens..." he says. "It's terrible. Because this is in the occupied territories, there are no jobs."

Gloomy as it is, life goes on

and hope for a better Christmas finds its way in people's hearts.

"All 24 years during the Israeli occupation, the Palestinians have paid a lot and have suffered a lot," said Mr. Nasser. "And always, this suffering inspires people to hope for the future."



Church of Nativity in Bethlehem

By Jill Lawrence
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (R) — "America first" is the new shorthand for presidential candidates trying to exploit domestic discontent. But the phrase can mean almost anything a politician chooses.

For Republican commentator Patrick Buchanan, "America first" is a conservative retort to President George Bush's avid internationalism, a modern-day echo of the isolationists of a half-century ago.

But for Democratic Gov. L.

Three of them are using explicit America first slogans — Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Wilder and former Ku Klux Klansman David Duke, running as an *nnwcome* Republican.

Mr. Duke promotes an America first world policy that would require Japan and Europe to mount their own defences "without the money of the United States of America or the troops of the United States of America."

Mr. Buchanan takes a broader

"Buchanan can be seen as an ideological descendant of the America first people," said historian Michael Kazin, a professor at American University. "He really believes at this point the United

memories of the America firsters and a firm view of a superpower's responsibilities.

"I don't want to see this country go back to America first and to protection that will shrink markets and throw people out of work," the president said last week. "We need to stand together against that call... to stay within ourselves."

Historians say the new incarnation of the America first movement lacks the intellectual muscle and credibility of the original. The premise, however, evidently still appeals to some Americans.

ly military aid to Japan and Germany. Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin also has suggested protectionist measures to safeguard American jobs.

Many of the candidates, however, are trying to make it clear that they are not isolationists.

"We need a government willing to lead in the world," Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey told students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology last week.

"Given the problems we face at home, we do have to take care of

Even Mr. Wilder, with his up-front "put America first" slogan, says that simply means he wants to reduce the federal deficit, cut middle-class taxes and help communities deal with crime and drugs. The theme "in no way" conflicts with our oadon's international standing or obligation to help friends in need," he said last week.

Most of the Democrats are talking about opening international markets to U.S. products and making U.S. industry more competitive, and in those ways assuring that the country will

By Gene Gibbons
Reporter

WASHINGTON — Day by day, the U.S. economic picture grows gloomier, highlighting President George Bush's greatest shortcoming — managing domestic policy and presenting it to the public.

In striking contrast to his bold, assertive style in the Gulf war, Mr. Bush seems to be groping for answers to the slump, shaking confidence in his leadership and life. Throwing him into a free-fall in the public opinion polls.

An apt illustration of why Mr. Bush is in trouble emerged last Wednesday when he travelled to Texas to sign a bill supposed to put hundreds of thousands of people to work building highways and mass transport projects.

The same day, General Motors, once unsurpassed in the world car industry, shocked the country by announcing massive

came to office after an era of financial frenzy and economic excess.

Mr. Bush wants to avoid Hoover's mistake of saying "prosperity is just around the corner" and letting things drift.

"Yes, these are tough times and yes, there are layoffs and many families are having a tough go of it," Mr. Bush said during his visit to Texas. "I want every American to know that getting the economy back on track is my number one priority."

But the administration is deeply divided about what to do.

Right-wing Republicans press for general tax cuts despite a \$375 billion federal deficit this year, but moderates say adding to the deficit would raise interest rates, killing prospects for recovery by making borrowing too costly.

Mr. Bush has wavered between opposing camps. He has prom-

NEWS ANALYSIS

her payoffs and a score of plant closures.

One factory believed to be a potential target for closure was just down the road from where Mr. Bush spoke. But instead of seizing the moment to talk about GM's distress and what he was doing about it, Mr. Bush remained silent.

The next day the Dallas Morning News described a presidential visit to a roadside cafe after the all-signing under the headline "Bush takes time-out to eat with a new worker."

Although the White House reacted at the suggestion, there are eerie parallels between Mr. Bush and Herbert Hoover, who left the presidency in disgrace because of the great depression of the 1930s.

Like Mr. Bush, Hoover was renowned as a global statesman. He followed a popular president, history paints as lazy and ineffectual — Calvin Coolidge, con-

vised to unveil a new economic plan before his later January State of the Union address and in the meantime Republicans have been floating all sorts of trial balloons, none inspiring much excitement.

One was a proposal to spur the economy by giving Americans a \$300 tax rebate, prompting one television commentator to snort: "A dollar a day keeps the recession away."

Mr. Bush's handling of the economy is reminiscent of his performance in last year's budget battle with Congress, establishing a budget agreement that limited options in today's crisis. Mr. Bush abandoned the main promise of his 1988 presidential campaign — "read my lips: no new taxes."

When reporters asked him about this retreat, Mr. Bush said flippantly, "read my lips" and pointed to his backside.

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
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U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	NEW YORK CLOSE	TOKYO CLOSE
Sterling Pound	1.8755	1.8775
Deutsche Mark	1.5194	1.5200
Swiss Franc	1.3495	1.3510
French Franc	5.1940	5.1886 **
Japanese Yen	126.99	127.45
European Currency Unit	1.3350	1.3357**

USD Per STD
** European Opening at 9:00 a.m. GMT

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	4.93	4.37	4.25	4.25
Sterling Pound	11.00	10.93	10.87	10.75
Deutsche Mark	9.81	9.62	9.50	9.50
Swiss Franc	6.50	6.25	6.06	7.87
French Franc	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.12
Japanese Yen	6.25	6.00	5.68	5.37
European Currency Unit	10.50	10.50	10.37	10.25

Interest rate for 100,000 J.O.D. (100,000 J.O.D. or equivalent)

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	359.67	6.80	Silver	3.92	0.085

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.676	0.678
Sterling Pound	1.2659	1.272
Deutsche Mark	0.4428	0.4450
Swiss Franc	0.4054	0.5009
French Franc	0.1297	0.1305
Japanese Yen	0.5300	0.5327
Dutch Guilder	0.3948	0.3958
Swedish Krona	0.1212	0.1215
Italian Lira	0.0584	0.0587
Belgian Franc	0.02161	0.02172

* Per 100

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7640	1.7720
Lebanese Lira	0.0765	0.0775
Saudi Riyal	0.1799	0.1806
Kuwaiti Dinar	-	-
Qatari Riyal	0.1632	0.1640
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2200
Omani Riyal	1.7305	1.7390
UAE Dirham	0.1632	0.1640
Greek Drachma	0.3735	0.3755
Cypriot Pound	1.5350	1.5460

CAB indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	22/12/91	Close	23/12/91	Close
All-Share	129.61		125.67	
Banking Sector	106.67		105.98	
Insurance Sector	128.64		126.71	
Industry Sector	163.63		162.20	
Services Sector	143.34		142.38	

* December 31, 1990 = 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.8750/70	U.S. dollars	1.8750/70
One U.S. dollar	1.5185/95	Canadian dollar	1.5185/95
	1.7080/100	Deutsche marks	1.7080/100
	31.23/27	Dutch guilders	31.23/27
	5.1750/50	Swiss francs	5.1750/50
	1148/1147	Belgian francs	1148/1147
	127.00/10	French francs	127.00/10
	5.5470/5570	Italian lire	5.5470/5570
	5.9800/9900	Japanese yen	5.9800/9900
	5.9100/9200	Swedish crowns	5.9100/9200
One ounce of gold	359.35/359.85	Norwegian crowns	359.35/359.85
		Danish crowns	
		U.S. dollars	

White House suggests room for even lower interest rates

WASHINGTON (R) — The White House said Monday there was room for lowering interest rates, suggesting that the Bush administration thinks the U.S. central bank, to stimulate the economy, could slash rates even further than last week's dramatic cut.

White House spokesman Mario Fitzwater also said the administration still believed there was a need for a package of government measures to boost the economy out of recession, despite the Federal Reserve's (Fed's) surprisingly large rate-cutting move Friday.

The Fed is "on the right track," Mr. Fitzwater told a news conference when asked whether the administration thought the Friday reduction in the discount rate to 3.5 per cent was sufficient to get the economy moving again.

"We believe that there is room for declining interest rates," Mr. Fitzwater said. "But we won't try to dictate that at this point."

"As we have said many times in the past, inflation is low and under control," he said.

Low inflation is a pre-condition for the central bank to make stimulative rate cuts like its Friday move cutting the discount rate to 3.5 per cent.

The Fed also lowered its target for the critical federal funds interest rate to four per cent from 4.5 per cent.

President George Bush and other officials repeatedly have sought to "talk down" interest rates to help the country out of recession this year and the Fed has responded with six cuts, of which Friday's was the largest.

It was the first full-point cut since 1981 and brought the discount rate to its lowest level in 27 years.

But it was also the first cut in the discount rate since Nov. 6, and administration officials worried by the economy's inability to bounce back from a recession that began in July 1990 said it had been high time for the Fed to act.

"The Fed's (Friday) move to extremely important, extremely helpful and long overdue," one senior official said.

He also made clear that while the administration welcomed the action, it believed there was room for interest rates to fall further.

"Anybody who tells you that this is as low as the Fed is going to go may well be wrong," he said.

Wall Street stocks soared Monday on a frenzied wave of buying, sending the key Dow index through the 3,000 level for the first time in six weeks.

The Dow Jones industrial average was up 80.20 points to 3,014.76 at 1845 GMT, just 15 minutes before the close of trading on the New York Stock Exchange.

Volume was a strong 184 million shares, with gains swamping losses by a 3-1 margin on the big board.

Traders said the market was encouraged by the sharp cut in interest rates Friday by the Federal Reserve, buying on the hopes that it would be enough to turn the economy and profits around.

"Lower interest rates have always had a positive impact on stocks," said Joseph Bardel, a market analyst at Fidelity Investments.

"They make bonds less attractive and stocks more attractive."

The market also gained from the traditional year-end tendency to rally, analysts said.

Lower rates also spurred businesses and consumers to borrow, boosting economic activity and lifting stock and bond prices.

But as rates fell, bonds and other fixed-rate investments, like money market accounts and certificates of deposit, tend to become less attractive.

In addition, the "Christmas rally" showed the expected signs of life.

"You have a seasonal bias that really takes hold at year end, where in the last week or so the market has an upside bias 80 per cent of the time," said Mr. Bardel.

"There's nothing at this point in time that's likely to change that profile," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Commerce Department predicted Monday that U.S. industry, both manufacturing and services, will revive and grow stronger next year after two years of weakness.

"The overall picture is one of moderate growth," Michael Farren, undersecretary of commerce for international trade, said at a briefing on the annual forecast of some 350 industries.

"Although a few industries will show rapid growth, most will grow moderately while exports of both manufactured goods and services would contribute substantially to the growth," Mr. Farren said.

Manufactured shipments for the industries in the outlook should grow by about 2.6 per cent in 1992 after adjusting for inflation, he said. This compares with an estimated decline of 1.9 per cent this year and a drop of 0.1 per cent in 1990.

The estimates are based on a forecast of overall U.S. economic growth of 3.0 per cent, which commerce officials concede is optimistic. They have made adjustments in their calculations as conditions weakened in past months.

Overall, most economists estimate the U.S. economy will grow by 2.2 per cent next year, which the department said was not different enough to affect the overall result for most industries.

Unlike previous years, the department said, no particular set of industries is likely to do exceptionally well and serve as leader for the overall economy.

The only possible exception was health care-related industries which continue to do well regardless of the business cycle, the department said.

Service industries should outperform manufacturing industries, led by a spurt in information services, it said.



Martin Fitzwater

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UAE aims to attract investment by arms suppliers

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) hopes to attract millions of dollars of European and American high technology investment from companies winning lucrative arms deals, a senior official said.

Amin Badr El Din, chairman of the government to organize the programme, told Reuters contracts would not be signed with weapons suppliers who refused to invest in the country.

He did not give details but described as exaggerated U.S. reports that the UAE was seeking \$10 billion of investments from arms manufacturers.

Industry sources said the estimates were apparently based on reports that the UAE was demanding arms suppliers invest 60 per cent of the total value of their contracts back in the UAE.

Mr. Badr Al Din said that the UAE programme was flexible and may not involve more than four per cent of the value of a contract.

No official figures are available but arms industry sources estimate the UAE is likely to spend up to \$3 billion a year on arms purchases over the next five years.

Mr. Badr El Din said that companies unwilling to enter into offset arrangements would not get the contracts.

"The UAE does not want the West to supply the weapons and then walk away," he said.

In exchange for the lucrative contracts, they had to contribute towards the economic development of the country, he added.

He said the UAE was seeking investments in a wide-range of private sector projects.

"Apart from the oil sector, everything is open," he said.

Projects on offer ranged from petrochemicals and construction, to date packaging, he said.

The Middle East's most talked about offset programme is in Saudi Arabia where U.S., British and French companies have undertaken to invest in Saudi industries, mostly to support the arms programmes themselves.

The American offset programme, for example, includes an advanced electronics and aircraft parts and other plants in which the Boeing aircraft company is investing more than \$300 million.

British investments include a missile engineering plant, a possible aluminium smelter and a synthetic yarn plant.

Mr. Badr El Din said some three dozen American, European and Japanese firms should be involved in the UAE offset but only 12 had so far signed agreements.

He dismissed fears by U.S. companies that the UAE's relatively small sector could not absorb such offset arrangements, saying the opportunities for investment were many and varied.

He would not name companies involved, saying an official announcement would be made in March.

Irish economy stumbles after four go-go years

DUBLIN, Ireland (AP) — Ireland's economy, hurt by recession in Britain, weak farm prices and double-digit interest rates, is stumbling after four years of go-go growth.

The economy compounds the difficulties of Prime Minister Charles Haughey.

Unemployment exceeded 20 per cent in September, up from 16.5 per cent in May 1990, and is expected to keep rising until mid-1993.

"The state of the economy has worsened quite a bit this year," says Kieran Kennedy, director of the Independent Economic and Social Research Institute. "We're not getting the kind of growth in jobs we need."

Mr. Haughey's position has been shaken by scandals in businesses, including the state-run telephone company and the recently privatised sugar company.

A survey of executives of the country's 200 largest companies, conducted in September and published recently in the Sunday

Business Post, found that 58 per cent were dissatisfied with the government's performance — compared to 18 per cent three months ago.

Because of a dearth of jobs in recession-hit Britain, net emigration for the year ended in April was zero, compared with an average of 27,000 a year in each of the previous four years.

Britain also consumes a third of Irish exports, so a recession in Britain has a double impact.

The economic slowdown and the resulting rise in unemployment is expected to push the budget deficit 50 per cent above target at 685 million Irish pounds (\$1.1 billion) this year.

That sets off alarms in a country that suffered a public finance crisis in the early 1980s.

The country's debt amounts to 26 billion Irish pounds (\$42 billion), 10 per cent more than its entire annual output of goods and services.

Ireland's economy will not grow at all this year, and will expand a modest two per cent next year, said Jim O'Leary, chief economist at Ireland's top brokerage firm Davy Stockbrokers.

Mr. Kennedy is more optimistic, forecasting two per cent growth this year, and 3.25 per cent in 1992.

Ireland had basked in average economic growth of 4.5 per cent a year from 1987 and 1990. During these years, Irish businessmen like U.S.-based H.J. Heinz Co.'s chief, Tony O'Reilly, became stars at home and abroad.

But Ireland was riding on the back of economic growth in bigger countries, and as those economies turned down, Ireland followed.

Although many Irish recognise that Ireland's problems result partly from geographical accident, they still expect the government to improve their lot, Mr. O'Leary said.

Irish interest rates, now above 10 per cent, may be at the mercy of German rates, for example, but the government could help the country by providing tax incentives for getting off welfare, Mr. O'Leary said.

"Irish people have a fair capacity for cynicism, fatalism, call it what you will," Mr. O'Leary said. "But at the end of the day people will look for a scapegoat."

But not all the economic news is bad.

Helped by national programmes that limit wage increases in both the private and public sector, the inflation rate is steady at an enviable three per cent.

The merchandise trade surplus, predicted at 1.7 billion pounds (\$2.7 billion) this year, is expected to continue to grow, to two billion pounds (\$3.2 billion) next year.

Interest rates, however, are above 10 per cent not because of government policy, but because Britain and Germany are keeping their rates high.

Ireland suffers from being a small, thinly populated island on the edge of Europe, with a birth rate 50 per cent higher than the European average.

Ireland is the third poorest country in the 12-nation European Community, richer only than Greece and Portugal. Its average per capita gross domestic product is \$8,984 compared with a European average of \$13,401.

"I think we're still under-achieving by a very large margin. We're underachieving in terms of our aspirations to get closer to the same living standards as Europe," Mr. O'Leary said.

High taxes are a discouraging factor. Although the basic income tax rate is 29 per cent, the threshold for a single taxpayer to qualify for the highest income tax rate of 52 per cent is an income of 12,986 Irish pounds (\$20,778) a year.

China to stop pay rises for workers at losing enterprises

PEKING (Agencies) — Millions of Chinese workers at loss-making state enterprises can no longer rely on automatic pay rises, the official China Daily has said.

The government, desperate to trim a huge budget deficit, plans to offer pay rises based on merit.

Since the communists took power in 1949, Chinese workers at state firms have been able to bank on receiving pay increases regardless of their effort or their companies' profitability.

"The uniform pay system is being abolished because it is egalitarian and hinders the workers' enthusiasm," a ministry of labour official was quoted as saying.

"The only automatic part of the new wage system is that those who work for enterprises that aren't turning a profit won't receive a raise at all," the newspaper said.

About a third of China's state firms run at a loss, he said. The end of automatic pay rises will affect 39 million workers, or 53 per cent of the workforce.

This new rule does not apply to military-related industries, it said.

Meanwhile, an official report revealed that wage increases given to Chinese workers were outstripping inflation, even as some enterprises went into the red.

By September, urban state employees were getting an average monthly salary of 177 yuan (\$33), an increase in real terms of six per cent, the China Daily reported.

In the first three quarters, the state paid out 224.15 billion yuan (\$42 billion) in basic wages, an increase of nearly 14 per cent over 1990. That compared with an eight per cent rise in prices over the same period in 35 large and medium-sized cities.

The state also gave out 85.3 billion yuan (\$16 billion) in bonuses and allowances, increases of 18 per cent and 10 per cent respectively, the report said.

The report said the raises often were given at the expense of technological improvements. Many state-owned firms were given

ing out pay hikes even though they were running at a loss, the paper said.

The wages in China were kept artificially low for decades, and everyone was given virtually the same pay regardless of skill or experience.

But in 1985, the central government began allowing employers to increase pay by 0.7 per cent for every one per cent increase in productivity. At about the same time, employers began handing out bonuses in an attempt to encourage and reward good work.

By 1989, however, wages were going up by 1.2 per cent for every one per cent growth in productivity, and the rate of pay hikes shot up to 3.26 per cent last year.

Bonuses became institutionalised, and were simply added to each worker's pay without consideration for his accomplishments.

The report said officials at the labour ministry were concerned that "eating from the same communal pot" has choked creativity and enthusiasm and was contributing to the poor efficiency of the nation's state-owned enterprises.

In another area, the China Daily said that China's major weapons maker wants foreign help in the economic war it is waging to transfer military technology to the making of civilian goods.

China North Industries Group (Norinco) is eager for joint ventures and technology transfer at home as well as partners to help it break into the Third World market, the newspaper quoted Deputy General Manager Tiao Ruizhang as saying.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Bulgarian Embassy in Amman invites all Bulgarian ladies' children for a New Year's party on Dec. 30, 1991 at 4:00 p.m. at the embassy's premises.

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Gorbachev to quit today

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev will announce his resignation Wednesday in a televised address, a Kremlin spokesman said Tuesday.

"The president will make a televised broadcast in which he will announce his resignation," spokesman Vladimir Tumarkin said Tuesday.

Mr. Gorbachev's resignation has been widely expected since last weekend when 11 republics formed a Commonwealth of Independent States to replace the Soviet Union.

TASS News Agency said a Mr. Gorbachev speech would be broadcast at nine p.m. (1900 GMT) Wednesday.

Russian leader Boris Yeltsin last week announced that his republic was taking over Mr. Gorbachev's official assets, as well as his Kremlin headquarters.

Mr. Gorbachev took leave of his official staff Tuesday, one of his aides said.

"I wish you all great happiness and success," the official quoted Mr. Gorbachev as telling the staff.

He told them they had no need to worry about their future employment and shook hands with them, said the official, who asked not to be named.

They drank soft drinks and ate cakes.

Russia Tuesday presented its radical economic reform plans to prime ministers of the other 10 members of the new Commonwealth of Independent States, Interfax News Agency said.

The proposals will be debated and, if approved by the prime ministers, presented to a meeting of heads of state on Dec. 30 in the Byelorussian capital Minsk, it said.

Some participants in the meeting, the first council of heads of government since the new commonwealth was expanded last Saturday, expressed doubts that agreement could be reached on the Russian plans so quickly.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar told the meeting that Russia would go ahead

with its plans, including the liberalisation of prices on Jan. 2, Interfax said.

Some republican leaders have criticised the plan, which is likely to force them to take similar measures to avoid destabilisation of their own, smaller economies.

Participants expressed fears that the price liberalisation would cause a scarcity of banknotes in their republics, the agency said.

Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Gennady Burbulis — Russian President Yeltsin holds the title of prime minister himself — said a committee of republican representatives set up in September to coordinate economic policy would cease to exist on Dec. 30, Interfax said.

The inter-state republican committee was chaired by Soviet Prime Minister Ivan Silayev, named by Mr. Yeltsin last week as Russia's permanent representative to the European Community.

The republican prime ministers also discussed economic cooperation in the first quarter of 1992. Meanwhile, the National Supreme Soviet legislature met for two hours Tuesday but failed to decide its future or formally acknowledge the demise of the Soviet Union.

President Mikhail Gorbachev did not attend the session despite expectations he might speak.

Without taking a formal vote, lawmakers agreed to hold what would be their final session following the next meeting of the new Commonwealth of Independent States, scheduled for Dec. 30.

Only about one-third of lawmakers attended the session of the Council of Republics, the upper chamber of the national legislature. The lower chamber has effectively been shut down by the refusal of several republics to send representatives.

Before adjourning, lawmakers debated a resolution recognising "the USSR as a subject of international law and geopolitical reality has ceased to exist."

The head of the Soviet Central Bank, Viktor Geraschenko,

offered his resignation, the chairman of the Soviet parliament's upper house said Tuesday.

But the Chamber of the Republics put off a decision on whether to accept the resignation until after this month.

In a letter to House Chairman Ananur Bek Aitmatov explaining his decision to resign, Mr. Geraschenko cited last Saturday's agreement by 11 republics to form the new commonwealth to replace the Soviet Union.

Mr. Aitmatov said the Central Bank chief had also offered the resignation of his deputy, Valeryan Kulikov.

The resignations are seen as a formality because the Russian parliament's leadership announced on Dec. 20 that the Central Bank would be abolished in its present form.

Mr. Gorbachev met with Russian President Boris Yeltsin for eight hours Monday to discuss the transfer of power, including command over the Soviet Union's 27,000 nuclear weapons.

The issue of who controls the nuclear "button" has been one of the most pressing questions since Mr. Gorbachev's central government collapsed in the wake of the attempted August coup.

Mr. Gorbachev late Monday gave British Prime Minister John Major "a great deal of reassurance" that the weapons were under tight control and would remain that way," Mr. Major said.

In a newspaper interview published Tuesday, Mr. Gorbachev reiterated his criticism of the new Commonwealth of Independent States, saying it was unclear whether it was "a unification or a fragmentation."

Mr. Gorbachev also warned of unrest if the economy and living conditions continue to worsen, but said he did not expect another military coup.

"The only danger comes from the street, if discontented people will take to the street and political prostitutes and political profiteers push them into action," he was quoted as telling Komsomolskaya Pravda.

In Washington, a Bush admin-

istration official said the United States will extend diplomatic recognition to Russia as an independent country this week and support it for the Soviet Union's seat on the United Nations Security Council.

The United States will also eventually recognise the independence of the other former Soviet republics that have broken away from the Soviet Union and formed the new commonwealth, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Illustrating the problems facing the country's new leaders, meanwhile, a third day of fighting raged in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia, where the elected president is battling opposition forces who have branded him a dictator. At least 30 have died in the clashes in Tbilisi, the capital, according to the Georgian Health Ministry.

Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who has been engaged in a sometimes bloody power struggle with the opposition since September, reportedly was holed up in the parliament building.

The TASS news agency said as many as 50 may have died in several days of battles. Independent confirmation of the toll was impossible due to the level of fighting.

On Saturday, 11 of the 12 former Soviet republics proclaimed a new Commonwealth of Independent States to replace the Soviet Union.

Lawmakers in Kazakhstan ratified the agreement Monday. Russia, Ukraine and Byelorussia already have signed the pact, and ratification was expected soon by parliaments in the other seven republics.

Fiercely independent Georgia was the only former republic, along with the Baltics, that refused to join, although its president told the British Broadcasting Corp. he was considering joining. The alliance will assume control over the Soviet military while letting other central government functions die or be handed over to republics.

Norway, Bulgaria recognise Byelorussia

OSLO (R) — NATO-member Norway and Bulgaria, longtime close ally of the Soviet Union, both announced their recognition of Byelorussia as a sovereign state Tuesday.

Norwegian Foreign Ministry spokesman Bjorn Blokkhus said his government was recognising both Byelorussia and Ukraine. Norway became the first Western nation to recognise Russia last week.

The three republics of the former Soviet Union form the mainstay of a newly-established Com-

monwealth of Independent States. All but one of the 12 republics that made up the disintegrating Soviet empire have said they are ready to join.

In Sofia, officials said Bulgaria now recognised Byelorussia's independence. Formerly the Soviet Union's staunchest ally, Bulgaria had already recognised Ukraine, a major supplier of coal and oil, on Dec. 5.

"Bulgaria also expressed readiness to establish diplomatic relations with Byelorussia and in the next few months a meeting between both foreign ministers will

be held," government press official Ivailo Damilov said.

In Oslo, Mr. Blokkhus said Norway was deciding whether to recognise the remaining republics.

"But it is not certain that we will recognise all," he said.

Switzerland Monday recognised the independence of the 12 Soviet republics with immediate effect, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said.

However, it made recognition of Georgia's independence conditional on a resolution of current upheavals in the republic.

China to establish ties with new republics

PEKING (Agencies) — China said Tuesday it was ready to establish relations with the newly independent republics that replace its old Communist neighbor the Soviet Union.

"China hopes that the setting up of the Commonwealth of Independent States will be conducive to stability of the situation and economic development," the Foreign Ministry said.

"We are ready to develop relations with republics of the former Soviet Union on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence," it said.

These principles call for no interference in each other's internal affairs, mutual non-aggression, mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit in relations and peaceful coexistence.

Cuba to recognise republics

Cuban President Fidel Castro wants to establish full relations with the republics that used to constitute the Soviet Union, the official Cuban news agency Prensa Latina quoted him as saying Monday.

The end of the Soviet Union "hurts and saddens all of us" because of its long friendship with Cuba, Mr. Castro said, adding that he sought the "greatest political and economic stability" for the constituent republics.

Mr. Castro spoke Sunday night at a conference of educators and scientists, Prensa Latina said. The report from Havana was monitored in Mexico City Monday.

Mr. Castro said Cuba is moving to establish diplomatic, commercial and political relationships with each of the former Soviet republics.

IRA calls ceasefire, Protestants refuse

DUBLIN (R) — The IRA, fighting one of the world's longest-running guerrilla conflicts, called a Christmas ceasefire from Tuesday but Protestant extremists said they would not follow suit.

Officially calling a halt to violence for the second Christmas in a row, the IRA said: "As of midnight Monday, active service units of the Irish Republican Army will be instructed to suspend hostile military operations for 72 hours."

The IRA, whose announcement in Dublin followed a weekend orgy of sectarian killings in Northern Ireland, said the ceasefire would cover Dec. 24, 25 and 26.

The Ulster Volunteer Force, (UVF), and outlawed Protestant group battling to keep the province British, said in a statement released in Belfast it would not do the same.

"The UVF will not respond to the IRA ceasefire. We view the IRA announcement as hypocritical and cynical. If any IRA members venture out of their bunkers, they will be dealt with," it said.

The halt to the IRA's two-decade-old guerrilla campaign coincides with the release on Christmas parole of 130 gunmen serving long jail sentences for terrorist offences.

British security authorities, who tend to dismiss IRA truces as media stunts, will be keeping troops and police on full alert throughout the holiday.

Britain's Northern Ireland Minister Peter Brooke said he welcomed the IRA truce but added it would be little comfort for families facing Christmas without a loved one "killed in the name of a cause which has no relevance for the Ireland or Europe of today."

He called on the IRA to give up violence for good and said that if they did not "the people, north and south, can only conclude that the IRA's real Christmas message came earlier this month in Belfast and Craigavon."

More than 100 people were injured in IRA car bomb attacks in the centre of Belfast and the border town of Craigavon.

The IRA has planted up to 300 firebombs across Northern Ireland and spread its "economic warfare" campaign to the British mainland, where firebombs have been planted in stores and firebombs and bombs used to halt London's rail network.

The guerrilla group, jubilant over what it considers to be a major propaganda success, has promised to "hit hard" with more attacks in Britain over the New Year.

After weekend carnage in Northern Ireland that left five people dead, the IRA distanced itself from the Protestant and renegade Republican gunmen responsible for the shootings.

The IRA, eager to be portrayed as a liberation army and not a sectarian killer gang, took the unusual step of issuing a statement in Dublin dissociating itself from the killings.

Police in Belfast have arrested eight Republicans and Protestants for questioning about the killings, which gave Northern Ireland its bloodiest weekend of the year and brought the death toll this year to 94, the worst for a decade.

Croats prepare for bomb-shelter Christmas

ZAGREB, Yugoslavia (R) — Hopes of a Christmas ceasefire in Yugoslavia's embattled Republic of Croatia died in a rain of artillery shells Tuesday.

"Bombs are falling all over the place," a police spokesman in Osijek told Reuters by telephone.

As shelling on the Croat-held town continued through Monday night and into Tuesday, Croatian radio urged people not to leave their basements and shelters.

But the police officer said the spirit of the town was not broken. "People are decorating trees and baking cookies in their basements and we won't let the bombing ruin our Christmas," he said.

There was no information on casualties and Tanjug News Agency, reporting dispatches from the Serb-led federal army, spoke of Croatian artillery hitting a nearby Serb-held village, but did not mention Osijek.

Croatian radio said fire on Osijek was coming from all the surrounding Serbian positions and the nearby villages of Valpovo, Bistrinci and Bjeljsnica were also hit.

It said the village of Nustar had been completely flattened, with not a single house left standing, but that Croatian troops were still holding it despite a combined infantry and artillery assault by federal forces that began Monday night.

Nustar lies just west of Vukovar, the Croatian border town that fell to the army last month after a three-month siege.

In the central Croatian battle zone, Sisak and Nova Gradiska and surrounding villages were also under fire, with each side

accusing the other of starting the attacks and ignoring the agreed ceasefire there.

But there were no fresh reports of fighting along Croatia's long Adriatic coast or in the area south of its capital Zagreb.

Talks between the warring sides were cancelled Tuesday following what the Croats called the "utter failure" of negotiations arranged for last Sunday between the army, the Croats and United Nations and European Community observers.

The federal army said the Croats had set impossible preconditions to new talks.

U.N. envoy Herbert Okun bower managed to meet Croatian President Franjo Tudjman at the weekend and Tuesday was having separate talks with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and federal Defence Minister Veljko Kadijevic.

In view of the upsurge in fighting, there seemed little prospect that Mr. Okun would advise that the time was right for sending in a U.N. peacekeeping force, as called for by both sides.

Gen. Kadijevic was also to meet later Tuesday with Alija Izetbegovic, president of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, which fears an extension of the Croatian fighting into its territory.

As in Croatia, Bosnia's Serb Minority has said it will break away rather than become part of an independent state.

Mr. Izetbegovic has formally asked the U.N. to send troops to his republic regardless of what it does in Croatia, but it is now known whether a reply has yet been received.

Friends, family mourn Chinese political activist

PEKING (R) — Friends and relatives of a political activist who died last week of cancer used his funeral Tuesday to quietly remember the 1989 military crackdown that ended massive pro-democracy protests.

About 100 people, including several well-known dissidents, paid their last respects to Wen Jie, 28, who died Friday after being hospitalised since January with colon cancer.

There were no banners, slogans or speeches, but a single white paper wreath with six black flowers and four red flowers symbolised June 4, 1989, the night soldiers marched into Peking and opened fire on pro-democracy protesters.

It was unusual for the government to allow a funeral for Mr. Wen, because it has banned memorials for the hundreds or even thousands who died in the crackdown. Nonetheless, it did not appear that the government was softening its stand towards the protesters.

Two student activists were put on trial in recent weeks. No verdicts have been announced. It seemed more likely that Mr. Wen's funeral was allowed because high-level officials were unaware of it.

Friends said Mr. Wen began developing health problems while in Qingcheng, a maximum-security prison outside Peking where many of the key figures from the 1989 movement were held.

Mr. Wen was in charge of propaganda work during the massive protests, and was arrested shortly after June 4. He was

released a year ago.

About 70 of Mr. Wen's friends and relatives attended a brief memorial service at People's Hospital. They included Hong Xianlin, wife of jailed dissident Wang Juntao, and Chen Xiaoping, a lawyer who had worked with Mr. Wen.

Those who attended the service first had to sign a register. Officials from the Peking Fashion Institute, where Mr. Wen taught classical Chinese literature, tried to keep reporters out.

Plainclothes police filmed the service, and dragged away a foreign reporter who tried to photograph the body, witnesses said.

About 30 other friends who gathered outside the hospital with white funeral wreaths were stopped at the gate. One later said they had reserved a time for a separate memorial service at the hospital but hospital officials refused to allow them to hold it, claiming the slot had gone to another family.

They followed the body to Babaoshan, a cemetery on the outskirts of Peking, where it was to be cremated. Cemetery workers whisked the body away after family members paid their last respects, and many of the friends were not allowed a final viewing.

Instead, they bowed deeply to a photograph of Mr. Wen carried by his nephew, and then pinned their black armbands to a wreath with black and red flowers.

Two white streamers with black borders hung from the wreath. A friend explained that they were purposely left blank "to make people think."

Tsongas tops poll of Democrats

CONCORD, New Hampshire (Agencies) — Former Massachusetts Sen. Paul Tsongas led all other Democratic presidential candidates in a poll of New Hampshire party members taken after New York Gov. Mario Cuomo announced he would not enter the primaries.

On the Republican side, the poll commissioned by the Concord Monitor and published

Monday found President George Bush leading conservative commentator Patrick Buchanan 58 per cent to 30 per cent. Twelve per cent of the Republicans surveyed said they were undecided.

Mr. Tsongas was the choice of 25 per cent of the Democrats surveyed who said they were likely to vote in New Hampshire's Feb. 18 presidential primary. Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton was next at 17 per cent. While Neb-

raska Sen. Bob Kerrey was third among the democratic hopefuls at 14 per cent.

Rounding up the democratic field, Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin was picked by 8 per cent of respondents, former California Gov. Jerry Brown by 6 per cent and Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder by 1 per cent. Twenty-nine per cent of the Democrats surveyed said they were undecided.

JORDAN VALLEY ARABIAN STUD

- The Jordan Valley Arabian Stud announces the beginning of the course for the cross-country riding to Ma'an. The round trip is 500 kilometres. Those who are interested must be at the Jordan Valley Arabian Stud every Friday at 5 o'clock in the morning.
- The first test will be 50 kilometres to test the rider and the timing will be four hours of riding, trot, cantor, gallop. Participants must call Thursday morning to confirm their arrival unless the weather does not allow the trip.
- The course will start on Friday Dec. 27. Timing is essential. Anyone who does not show at the designated place and time will be disqualified.
- The trip will be lead by the Ret. Col. Nasser Mirza and Mr. Sa'ed Taha the retired administrative manager of the Royal Stables who has 40 years experience in cavalry and riding. This course is open for Jordanians and non-Jordanians.
- There will be a polo field for the locals and for the foreign and diplomatic community so they can establish a polo team to compete with local teams.
- There is a special programme for the handicapped children free of charge.
- The club is open all day to the public to see the activities and also the pure Arabian horses registered with World Arabian Horse Organisation (WAHO). Entrance is free for the public.
- For further information contact the office of the club, telephone number: 829882, Fax 829883. Jaber Trading Centre - Mecca Street.

Bangladesh forces on alert as Burma starts military build-up

CHITTAGONG, Bangladesh (R) — Bangladesh put its border forces on high alert Tuesday after intelligence reports said Burma had started a huge military build-up along the border, security officials said.

The mobilisation of forces on the Burmese side was clearly seen from the Naikbyangbari, Ukha and Teknaf border areas, officials told reporters in southern Chittagong.

"Bunkers and trenches being built by the Burmese ... are also visible from these areas," an intelligence official said.

Bangladesh Rifles border

guards had stepped up patrols, deployed more soldiers to man camps and were building a network of trenches and bunkers, intelligence officials said.

Residents were being told to evacuate border villages, they said.

The build-up followed several recent frontier incidents, including an attack by a Burmese border force on a Bangladesh Rifles camp Saturday in which one Bangladesh soldier was killed and three were wounded.

A resident of nearby Rezapura village died when a bomb believed planted by the Burmese

exploded hours later.

The Foreign Ministry called in Burmese Ambassador Soe Myint Sunday to deliver a protest note and demand compensation for the losses.

Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman told Soe Myint the incidents violated a 1978 border agreement and demanded urgent steps to defuse tension.

"We have also urged Myanmar (Burma) to urgently return all arms and ammunition, to stop troops build-up and other provocative acts and arrange adequate compensation for the losses, including loss of life."

Polish parliament approves new government

WARSAW (R) — Poland's deeply divided parliament finally voted in a new government Monday after eight weeks of wrangling over economic policy since the country's first free post-war general elections.

The Sejm (lower house) voted 235 to 60 with 139 abstentions for the government of Prime Minister Jan Olszewski, even though the Solidarity lawyer hacked

down from earlier promises to ease the unpopular austerity measures of the past two years.

Most of the parties elected in the Oct. 27 elections campaigned against the tough market reforms of the previous two Solidarity governments, which have tamed inflation at the cost of high unemployment and falling output.

"I had dreamt it would be a cabinet of breakthrough, but such

a government was not formed ... There can be no breakthrough in the economy," Mr. Olszewski told deputies before the vote.

"We face dramatic and painful problems, social patience is running away and protests spread throughout the country, but no Polish government would now be able to fulfil demands requiring an increase in public spending," he said.

The parliamentary vote gives the government a 17-vote margin under the system which requires the support of more than 50 per cent of those taking part.

But Mr. Olszewski's programme and cabinet line-up have come under fire.

The Liberal Democratic Congress of outgoing Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki and the Democratic Union led by Mr.

COLUMN 8

Feminists want 'mother Christmas' alongside Santa

HELSINKI (R) — Feminists in Finland are demanding that Santa Claus should be accompanied by a woman on his Christmas sleigh rides around the world. The man in red robes is traditionally depicted in Finland as being married. Paid Santa Claus who visit homes to bring presents and sing carols often bring a "wife" along. But the league of Finnish feminists would like to see mother Christmas gaining international status. "Why can't Santa ride with his wife on his reindeer around the world?" asked Leena Rummavuori, an official of the League of Finnish feminists. "Mother Christmas would be a sign of greater sexual equality."

Father Christmas robbers hold up Swedish bank

STOCKHOLM (R) — Two robbers, both disguised as Santa Claus, held up a Swedish bank at gunpoint Monday and escaped with Christmas sacks bulging with cash, police said. The pair surprised the bank, at Taby North of Stockholm, by descending rapidly from a hole in the ceiling, drawing guns and commanding staff to fill their sacks with money. One employee sounded the alarm, but by the time police arrived the two had vanished with their loot. "We've scared the whole shopping centre but they are not here," said police Chief Inspector Kjell Engstrom.

Robbers order clerk to sing Jingle Bells

HUNTINGTON BEACH, California (AP) — Two masked youths forced a grocery clerk to sing Jingle Bells while they robbed the store, police said. The robbers, described as 16 to 18 years old, entered the Key Market and showed clerk Wayne Reams a knife and what appeared to be a handgun, said Police Lt. Patrick Gildea. They ordered Reams to lie down and sing the Christmas tune while they robbed the store, fleeing with 188 in cash, said Gildea. A third person was seen running with the pair through the store parking lot. Reams, 44, was uninjured, police said.

U.S. space command centre to track Santa's Journey

COLORADO SPRINGS, (R) — The North American Aerospace Defence Command Centre (NORAD) — usually on the lookout for rocket launches and any unknown aircraft approaching North America — said Monday it will track Santa Claus' ride from the North Pole. NORAD, which operates from the interior of Cheyenne Mountain, says it will provide U.S. and Canadian media with "Santa tracking" reports for radio and television broadcast on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24. The Christmas tradition started in 1955 when a local department store advertisement of a phone number for Santa mistakenly printed the hotline phone number of NORAD's commander-in-chief. On Christmas Eve that year calls came into the NORAD centre from children who were wondering about Santa's progress.

Christmas tree breaks in two, injures 2 passers-by

FRANKFURT (AP) — A 22-metre Christmas tree snapped in two on a downtown square Monday, slightly injuring two passers-by. Strong winds apparently caused the tree to break, a spokesman for the fire brigade said. Two men walking by suffered minor cuts and scratches in the mishap. The tree was put up by a Frankfurt hotel. The hotel management said it had no plan to replace the tree.

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